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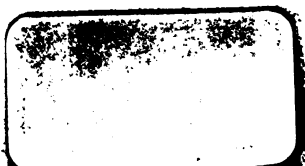
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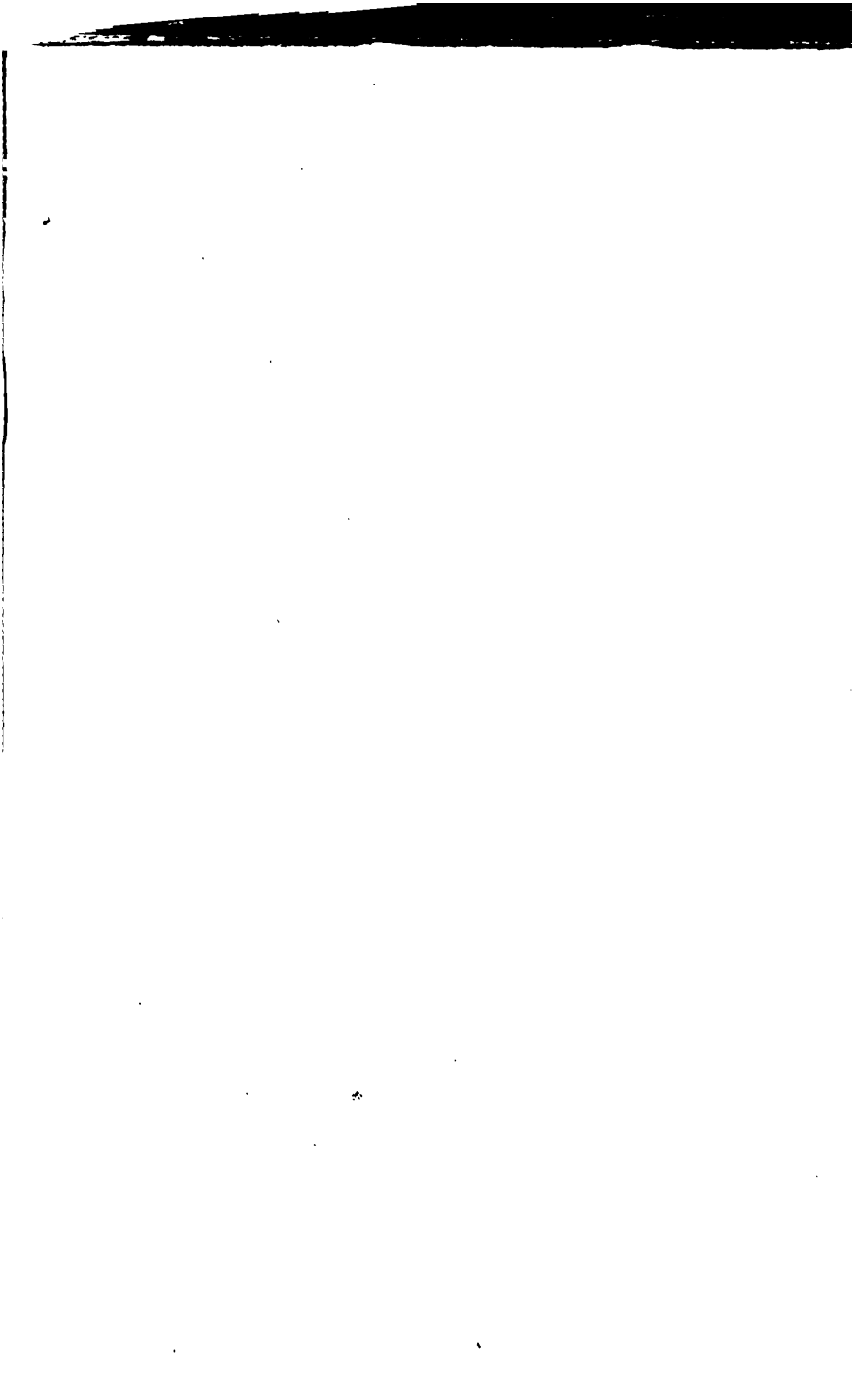
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THE
BARONET'S FAMILY.

CHAPTER I.

If the reader has been interested in the fate of Herbert Llewellyn, he will, perhaps, be pained to find him, after so long a separation, so miserably situated. His own slight sketch of his history will be sufficient to give all the necessary information respecting his captivity, but there are a few incidents connected with his friend Margarita, that it will be well to relate

more fully, before we again take our leave of him.

When Herbert was placed under the peculiar care of Margarita, his captors were well aware that he could not have a stricter guardian. Margarita hated the English with the implacable hatred of her country, and panted to revenge on the whole nation the wrongs she had suffered from one individual of it.

And what were her wrongs? Her story, alas! is only one more leaf, added to the great book of man's selfishness and sin. Although it has been often told before, and will be often again repeated, the leaf must be written here. She was the child of honest parents, who lived in a pretty little Italian farm amongst the mountains. She was "beautiful exceedingly," according to the beauty of her countrywomen. She grew up, to use her own figurative language, like a wild vine, unpruned and uncultivated. Her parents loved her too blindly to correct her. She was full

of passion and pride ; capable of the most devoted love, and the most intense hatred. She was the envy of the maidens, and the admiration of the youths of her village, but like the Margaret of Göthe, her beauty was her destruction.

In vain had she been wooed by the young men around her ; none of them could win her love. Wilful and wild as a gazelle, if she gave but a glance from her dark eyes, or a word of seeming encouragement, it was but to withdraw the one, and to repent the other.

At last there came a stranger to her hamlet, an English traveller. He was a gentleman, apparently, by birth, education, and profession, but not by nature. His name was Mordaunt—at least so he said,—his profession, the army. He saw Margarita crowned with flowers at a rustic gathering—mingled with the throng that surrounded her—danced with her, and was captivated by her beauty and innocence. He sought her day after day, persuaded

her that he loved her, and succeeded in winning her affections. Margarita's love was of no common nature. It was a devotion unknown to the colder children of the north. Mordaunt could not understand it, though he gloried in being its object. She said she could die for him, and doubtless would have done so if required. She was pure as the snow of her own mountains, and this her lover knew. The arts of the seducer were lost upon her. It was only by a proposal of marriage that he could win her to instant flight with him, and to this she consented with pain, as she dearly loved her parents. But the passion that burnt in her ardent bosom was stronger than filial duty, and when Mordaunt assured her that secrecy was necessary, for the present at least, she believed him, and eloped with him from her peaceful mountain-home.

They were married, so at least she thought. Beneath the secrecy of night, a man in priestly attire joined their hands,

and read the marriage service, whilst Mordaunt's servant witnessed the proceedings. They travelled together for several weeks, and Margarita would have been happy but for the recollection of her parents. Mordaunt one day informed her that he was recalled to his regiment, and with subtle speech, told her that he thought it best for her to return to her parents for a few months, until he could again visit Italy, and take her with him to England. Margarita remonstrated, and said it would be impossible to return to her home again, after having left it as she had done. Mordaunt said there was no other course, as he dared not then acknowledge her as his wife. Margarita's passionate nature was soon aroused, and she fancied that some hidden meaning lurked behind the words she heard. She said that if she returned home, she must do so as his wife, or not at all, and begged to have the certificate of her marriage, that she might show it to her parents. Mordaunt said that he knew not

how to procure it, and coldly added, that they might believe her word. Again Margarita insisted upon accompanying him to England, saying that she could live as well in retirement there as in Italy, until such time as he could openly acknowledge his marriage. His heartless manner exasperated her, and she insisted on asserting her rights as a wife. He said that she could not do this; as her marriage in Italy, by a Roman Catholic priest, would not be valid in England. This declaration was the finishing stroke to Margarita's wrath. She upbraided Mordaunt as a deceiver; and he, no longer caring to wear the mask he had hitherto assumed, told her that neither in Italy nor England was she his wife, since a sham marriage, performed by a pretended priest, had been the only union that had taken place between them.

Maddened to fury by this intelligence, the unhappy woman uttered heavy maledictions on the destroyer of her peace and honour, and swore to be revenged. She

was seized with temporary insanity, during which the wretch who had been her destruction, left her to her fate, merely enclosing some money in a letter, which he gave to the care of the people of the inn, in which they had been staying. He also paid them to take charge of her until she recovered. The good hostess was more compassionate than her deceiver. She tended her until her reason returned, which, alas, was restored but too soon. When she received the letter, which contained protestations of affection, more insulting to her than the harshest reproaches could have been, she tore it in pieces, and gave the money it contained to the worthy people of the inn. During the night she wandered away, she scarcely knew whither; but far from her own home. She found herself in the morning amongst some unfrequented paths in the mountains. She suddenly met a young man, by the name of Giulio, who, in her extreme youth, had been her lover, but who had been unfor-

fortunate in life, and had joined the banditti that infested the mountains. Although he had forgotten his old tenderness in the bandit's course, he had not lost all kindly feeling, and when he saw the object of his first-love, alone, and evidently in extreme misery, he did his best to console her. He, like herself, had met with disappointments, and to him she could confide her sorrows, as to a kindred spirit. He listened to the tale of her wrongs with indignation, and told her that he would help her to avenge them, if she would go with him. Careless of what became of her, she followed him to the haunts of the banditti, after he had sworn to protect her from insult and injury. Her own wild and passionate manner; the frenzy of her gestures, and the mad fire of her eyes, were her best protection; but Giulio gave his comrades to understand that she was his wife, and that she was unhappily insane. He told them, also, that she was an inveterate foe of the English, and might serve them in case

they should have any chance dealings with individuals of that race. Giulio placed Margarita in the cave to which the reader has been already introduced, and whither the bandits rarely came. He provided for her wants, and promised that she should have the care of the first English prisoner. She brooded over her wrongs, until she again became nearly mad. She passed her days in wandering about the mountains, but cared not to escape from her place of refuge. There was something in the wild life of the bandits, and their recklessness, that pleased her, and seemed to awaken sympathy in her own passionate heart. Over and over again she described Mordaunt to Giulio, and told him that she was sure he was still in Italy, in the vague hope of having him in her power, and of plunging the dagger she kept concealed in her bosom, into his faithless heart.

Such were the feelings she nourished, when Herbert Llewellyn was confided wholly to her care, and the bandits knew

that he could have no more cruel keeper. When he was brought to her cave, he was in the last stage of weakness; truly next door to death. He had been, for some time previously, merely kept alive by means of oranges and dried fruit, and, as he has himself already related to the stranger, reserved for vengeance. When Margarita saw him laid upon the wretched bed in the corner of the cave, with a fetter round his wrist, and no power of motion, or sign of consciousness, she rejoiced with the joy of a savage, at the sight of a conquered foe. She was left alone with her prisoner, and her first thought was how she could best wreak upon him the vengeance she had so long reserved for his countryman. She looked at him again. He was emaciated, insensible, and helpless as an infant. Her hand held the hilt of the ever-ready dagger; her grasp relaxed, and she did not draw it forth. She had never before seen any fellow creature reduced to such a condition. In spite of the demon that

possessed her heart, she was still a woman, and a faint emotion of pity showed that the Divine spark of feeling was not yet extinguished in her breast. She procured wine and water, and wetted the parched lips. When the eyes unclosed for a moment, and looked at her with the melancholy gaze of delirium, a tear, the first she had shed since Mordaunt left her, fell upon the bloodless cheek of her imaginary enemy. The woman's heart returned, and she felt that she had no power to injure one so dependent. She laid aside her revenge for the time, and sought to revive the miserable being that mutely called upon her for aid. Was it, she asked herself, pity or cruelty, that moved her to call him back to a life of misery? She tried every restorative within her reach, and her efforts at last succeeded in bringing a slight pulsation to the heart. She persevered, and the lips moved and the eyes again unclosed. It was long, very long—many a weary hour—before

any-thing like speech returned, and when, at last, she had the satisfaction of hearing a few words uttered by her patient, she found that they proceeded from a mind from which reason had fled. By degrees, however, he regained his bodily functions, and death, for the hour, seemed to leave him to her less tender mercies.

Day after day, and week after week, she watched by him, and nursed him. A low fever and incessant delirium was upon him at first, and she listened to his wandering speech with an interest that she never thought to feel again for any living thing. When he called her "his Gwenthlean," she wept, and pitied him more and more. When he spoke of his home by the sea ; of the rocks and mountains—of his aged grandfather—her heart was nearly breaking, for his words recalled her own parents.

At last the fever left him, and a slow, very slow and gradual return to consciousness succeeded. After a trance-like state of inaction, which proceeded from pros-

tration of bodily strength, the mind was re-awakened, and the wretched certainty of present and future misery dawned upon it. Herbert knew that there was no hope of release, and almost wished that Margarita had let him die. She, however, continued her anxious care. Her pity grew into affection. Revenge was swallowed up in tenderness. It matters not for our tale, whether he replaced Mordaunt in her heart, or whether her feelings for him were simply those of a friend or sister, but she loved him. She again had an object in life. To restore him to his home and friends, and above all to Gwenthlean, was now her aim. She seized upon every available remedy to assist her in restoring him to strength. She gathered herbs and simples from the mountains, the virtues of which she had learnt in childhood, and made him take them. She invented a thousand falsehoods to screen his amendment from the bandits, and still feigned hatred for him. She entreated him to

pretend still to have lost his reason, which he did : at least he never spoke at all, and his enemies at last relaxed their vigilance, and left him to himself. Giulio discovered Margarita's change of purpose, but did not betray her. On the contrary, he frequently assisted in procuring restoratives and amusement for the sufferer, and managed to have the chain removed from his wrist. Margarita talked and sung to Herbert, and sought to amuse his mind. She read to him from an old copy of the sonnets of Petrarch, and an old Roman Catholic missal, which Giulio gave her; she represented to him the possibility of escape—she brought flowers to him from the mountain. What did she not do for him? and for all her love and care, she felt well repaid by a faint smile, or a weakly murmured,

“God bless you.”

When she told him her own sad story, Herbert, also, once more found an object in life. To lead this poor stray sheep

back to the ways of peace, was something to live for. Whenever his strength permitted, he talked to her of holy things, and exhorted her to repentance. He repeated to her the truths of the Bible, and told her that they were written for her. He assured her, that her Saviour would open the gates of heaven for her, if she laid down the burden of her heavy revenge at his feet, and forgave her enemy, as He had done his. To soften her heart was not the work of days, but of months. She listened silently to the hollow voice of him, who, from his miserable bed, spoke this new and strange doctrine to her. She rarely spoke at such times, and he knew not whether he made any impression ; but he remarked a less vivid fire in her eyes and less determination about the rigid mouth ; and, sometimes, when she thought him asleep, he saw her on her knees in prayer. By degrees, her stern nature began to relent, and Herbert saw the tears fall for her own sins, that had hitherto only fallen for

him ; and heard her cry for mercy rather than vengeance. He prayed with and for her, and solemnly entreated her to solicit the aid of the Holy Spirit, to enable her to bring forth fruit meet for repentance. When she began to acknowledge her errors, she said that she knew no one had ever sinned so deeply, and been forgiven—that Herbert, who was good and innocent, might obtain mercy ; but that it was not for such as her. Then he represented to her the errors of his own life—his passionate longing for distinction—and all his dreams of empty ambition. He told her that he had never fully realized the truths of the Gospel until sickness and sorrow had fallen heavily upon him, and he had found that worldly honours were, indeed, but the *ignis fatuus* of life, leading through swamps and mists, away from the straight path of religion and quiet happiness. Thus, in efforts, on the part of Margarita, to restore Herbert to health, and in endeavours, on his side, to recover her from

the sickness of soul under which she laboured, had passed the last months of Herbert's captivity, up to the period of the arrival of the stranger in the cave. Small progress appeared to have been made in Margarita's good work ; still Herbert was better ; and she hoped for further amendment. The sight of a countryman was beneficial, and seemed to revive the drooping spirit of the poor exile.

We must now, once more, bid him farewell, and leave him to the guardianship of his faithful friend, Margarita. Happily we leave him in the first peaceful sleep that he has enjoyed for months, which Margarita watches with breathless intensity of delight. A slight smile is on his lips, and the flush of excitement on his cheeks, for he dreams of those to whom he has sent messages of love. The first streak of dawn has just pierced through the opening of the cave, and falls upon the pallet, and Margarita's anxious face. It contrasts painfully with the dismal walls of the

cavern, where it would seem that nothing so bright and beautiful could enter. But where cannot sunshine penetrate? Like, the grace of God, into the most sombre places—even to the innermost recesses of the human heart, often more gloomy than the cave of the bandit.

CHAPTER II.

“Excuse me if I say with Euryalus, ‘*Nequeam lacrymas perferre parentis.*’ A rigid divine may call it a carnal tie ; but sure it is a virtuous one : at least, I am more certain that it is a duty of nature to preserve a good parent’s life and happiness, than I am of any speculative point whatever.”

Pope’s Correspondence.

WHEN the carriage, in which Clare Llewellyn travelled from Wales to Bath, drew up at the door of her aunt’s handsome house in the Royal Crescent, her feelings were not of the most enviable nature. She had been endeavouring, during her journey, to form plans for her proceedings with the Countess Sforza ; but they all vanished

from her mind as she set foot on the stone steps of the entrance, and finally found herself in the drawing-room. Never had she returned her aunt's usually cold embrace with such frigidity before ; never had she met her after an absence with such a chilling salutation. But she could not help it. Not all her resolution to conceal her feelings until a fitting opportunity of disclosing them, could conquer the disgust she felt at the sight of one, who had, for so many years, acted so deceitful a part, and kept her in ignorance of the dearest and nearest tie that can bind heart to heart—nay more, had endeavoured to instil into her young mind, unkind thoughts of the gentlest, fondest, dearest of parents. Clare had self-command enough in the mere fashionable, common-place world she lived in—but she had none when the best feelings of her soul were interested and concerned.

“I am glad you are come, my dear,” said the Countess, evidently without notic-

ing the change in Clare's manner. "Lord Hastings told me you would certainly be here to-day, and it really is essential that we should pay every attention to this Colonel Llewellen, when he arrives. He has been an age in India, where he has made himself as rich as Croesus, and has not a nearer relative in the world than ourselves. He has been travelling through Europe on his way home, and found out my address some how or other in Italy. He does not say when he will be here, but it may be this week or next. It will be a great bore to have to entertain a fussy, old Indian, and quite out of my way; so you must do the agreeable, for the sake of his ten thousand a year."

"I never would play the agreeable for the mere sake of gain, to any living creature," said Clare, "therefore, cannot undertake Colonel Llewellen."

"Nonsense, my dear," said the Countess, "that is all romance. You had better go

and take off your travelling dress, and I will order dinner at once."

Clare was glad to make her escape. Her heart was bursting to tell her aunt all she knew, and even then her resolution was giving way. She went to her room, and instead of changing her dress, sat in deep thought, until Louise came, uncalled, and roused her. She was making unpleasant comparisons. She seemed to feel upon her cheek the warm, fond kiss of her mother, and the maternal tears of joy and love that accompanied it: she was, in imagination, pressed in her arms, in a long, heartfelt embrace—she saw her mild, beautiful eyes beaming upon her—she heard her gentle tones of affection—she was conscious of being tenderly loved by a mother and sisters—and such a mother and sisters! and she knew that they were at that moment thinking and speaking of her. She had left them in retirement—not now, she thanked God, in poverty—though their

means of support were uncertain—she had come back to affluence and the world : but what were they ? There was the cold, formal salute of her cold, fashionable aunt—there would be soon the mockery of warm-heartedness, in the visits of her acquaintances. Oh ! that she were again in her mother's arms—oh ! that she were by her sweet sister's side !

Louise dressed her without her saying a word. She went down to dinner, it passed without much conversation, for the servants were in attendance. Her aunt asked her if she were tired, or in love, or both, that she was so silent ; and her reply was short and absent. Her aunt was curious to know about the Wynnes, their Place, &c. ; but she was unsatisfactory. When they were left to themselves, the Countess began upon the visit to Hastings Abbey.

“ I almost promised Lord Hastings to go as soon as Colonel Llewellen would permit me. The only drawback is my poor

frame. I never have recovered that Italian affair. By the bye, Lord Hastings said he had seen the poor tutor's grandfather."

"Yes," said Clare, "and so have I."

"You! and what was he like?"

"Very old, very venerable, and deeply afflicted."

"My dear, you give me the horrors by your solemn tones. One would think you had seen a ghost! Who and what is he?"

"He is a clergyman by the name of Lloyd, Rector of the parishes of Glanheathyn and Craigyvellyn in Wales."

Clare fixed her eyes on her aunt as she pronounced these names. When they were in Italy, Glanheathyn had been familiar to them as the residence of the unfortunate Herbert, and to which place Lord Hastings had directed his letters; but Craigyvellyn had never been mentioned. Clare knew that her aunt must have addressed her few and short letters to her mother at Craigyvellyn, therefore, she wished to see whether the name would strike her. It

did, apparently, since she repeated the word, though evidently, at first, without knowing where she had heard it.

"Craigyvellyn," she said. "I have heard that name, surely," then suddenly recollecting herself, her face flushed scarlet, and she asked, anxiously, how Clare had managed to get there.

"I went with my sister to see my mother," said Clare, whilst her heart beat quick, and her lips quivered.

Had a thunder-bolt suddenly fallen between the aunt and niece, the former could scarcely have been more terrified and astonished. For the first time in her life, Clare saw her display natural feelings. She trembled between passion and shame—shame at being found out by the girl she had so cruelly deceived. But this unwonted combat did not last long. She soon relapsed into her customary indifference, and asked, as coolly as she could what Clare meant.

Steadily, but respectfully, Clare went

through the history of her meeting with Gwenthlean, and the consequent discovery of her relatives. She endeavoured to avoid aggravating her aunt's feelings by any personal allusions—did not even seem to suppose that she knew anything about her mother, but simply told an unvarnished tale, leaving her aunt to draw her own conclusions from it. And she certainly did appear to draw her own conclusions, if her countenance was the index of her mind; for it underwent perpetual variations. She listened, however, coolly, and without once interrupting her niece, until she ceased to speak, and then drawing herself up proudly, and as if she were deeply injured, said—

“ Well! you have made quite a Novel out of your meeting with that distinguished songstress at that vile Welsh music affair; and, doubtless, think yourself a heroine. I always imagined that child would disgrace her family; she was the image of her mother.”

Clare felt her blood boil in her veins; for is there anything so exasperating as to feel that those you love are trampled on?

“My sister is no disgrace to her family,” she said, indignantly; “but its highest honour—I wish I could boast of so certain a title to excellence as she does.”

“Perhaps you had better make your *début* at the next Gloucester festival,” said the Countess, ironically. “I doubt not you would be rapturously received.”

“I have no ambition of the kind,” replied Clare, “neither had my sister—but she is one of the loveliest creatures I ever beheld, and such was the universal opinion of every one that she met at the Wynnes’.”

“And pray do our friends know of this mighty discovery you have made?”

“No! the secret rests with ourselves.”

“So much the better. It would never do for the world to know you had such beggarly relations.”

“What! not even though they are my

own mother and sisters! Besides, they are all more perfectly lady-like than any of our acquaintances."

"Oh, yes! I dare say," said the Countess, with a sneer, "I remember your—ah! hem—Lady Llewellyn always set up for being a quiet, genteel sort of person; but she generally failed with people who were at all *distingué*."

"Really!" said Clare, "I should never have imagined that possible, since it is always allowed, that quiet, lady-like manners, even when accompanied by comparative imbecility, pass in society for good breeding; and many a fool goes down as somebody, simply because she has the talent of hiding her inanity under a lady-like exterior, and saying nothing. But my mother is not only well-bred, but sensible and elegant."

"You seem to have discovered wonders in a short time," said the Countess, angrily; "but all this is folly. I suppose you mean to perform something magnanimous, for

you have been evidently in the heroics ever since you have been back; so for pity's sake, my dear, finish at once; for I never could stand scenes in my life, and shall die of it."

"I really do not know what you mean, aunt," said Clare, in an annoyed voice. "I see nothing magnanimous or heroic in being so happy as to find you have a mother and sisters, when you imagined you had none."

"Happy, indeed! It is the most unfortunate discovery you could possibly have made, and unless you are extremely careful, and insist upon their keeping the secret, it may ruin your prospects for ever."

"I see no necessity of keeping the secret; nor do I see how my having such near and dear relatives can injure my prospects."

The Countess Sforza opened her eyes even broader than she sometimes opened them for a fashionable stare. Clare stood

her gaze without shrinking. At last she said—

“Why Clare, you perfectly astonish me. Is it possible that all the pains which have been taken with your education should be thrown away, and that you should be, at least, so little versed in knowledge of the world as not to know that there is not a greater curse than poor relations.”

“So Charles Lamb says, I believe,” responded Clare, drily.

“What has Charles Lamb to do with us? Do you not know that you are *now* looked upon as a person of consideration, but that with an almost destitute mother and sisters, you will be thought very differently of?”

“The opinion of anybody who would judge me by the circumstances of my friends, is not worth a thought. I would relinquish any one whom I had considered my friend, did he show so contemptible a spirit, even had I discovered my mother to be a farmer's wife, instead of a baronet's.”

"Then I suppose you mean to take up your mother and this heroic sister of yours, and talk of them as your friends."

"I certainly mean to treat them, talk of them, and consider them as my mother and sisters, as long as they have no objection, under whatever circumstances I may be placed ; and surely, my dear aunt, you could not expect me to do otherwise."

Clara added the concluding clause in a pacifying tone, fearing that it would not please, but it had no effect on her aunt, whose torpid nature was roused, and who was violently irritated.

"I certainly do expect you to do otherwise, Miss Llewellen," she said, as soon as she could gain utterance ; "or you must renounce me. Do you suppose that I have brought you up in ignorance of those who have been a disgrace to your family, and the means of its ruin, until your present age, with the intention of your becoming re-united to them, when your expectations are as good as they now are ? Your

mother was a person of low birth and low cunning, and by scheming, got into the good graces of your father and grandfather; and finally, by her extravagance, ruined her husband. I vowed then, never to notice her again, and I never will—nay more, if any person connected with me holds any correspondence with her, I will renounce her also, and never see her more.”

Clare's face turned from red to pale, as her aunt spoke, and when she ceased, she felt oppressed and bewildered. Here was a crisis, when she had hoped to have laid the foundation for a reconciliation. But she understood her powers ill; she was too determined and independent herself to conciliate, and would not yield, indeed did not know how to yield, when her feelings were concerned. She looked at her aunt's flushed face, and remembered that her anger was not only unjust, but that she had been, herself, the cause of it. She did not love her aunt though she was grateful

to her ; and she believed that her aunt's feelings for her were more those of gratified pride than affection. She knew that it would wound her in her tenderest part—that of her family pride—were she to do anything derogatory to her station, and therefore did not imagine that she would keep her word so as to send her away. But she did not know that selfishness and vanity will do anything to gain their own ends ; and the Countess would rather have seen her favourite niece in poverty than have acknowledged her rival, Lady Llewellyn, or re-admitted her into her family.

Clara sat a few moments silent, as if to regain composure herself, or to allow her aunt to do so ; then she said—

“ I scarcely understand you, aunt. You certainly cannot *mean* to asperse a mother's character in the presence of her daughter, much less to threaten to renounce that daughter for acknowledging her own mother.”

"I mean exactly what I say," was the reply, "and since you come more closely to the point, I beg to add, that you may choose between an aunt who has educated and brought you up like a princess, and a mother who first ruined you, and now, I dare say, wishes to pre-judice you against me : there is nothing too bad for her art or deceit."

Clare could not bear this. She rose from her chair with dignity, and standing a few minutes before her aunt, spoke with agitation, but firmness.

"You are mistaken," she said. "My mother spoke of you very differently from what you imagine, recommending me to be dutiful and grateful to you. I would be both, but you forbid me. Nothing ; no arguments, no persuasions, no interest, could ever make me renounce my mother. I would gladly keep my *two* mothers, but you say you will not allow me—that *you* will never see me more. If there is no alternative"—here she paused, but the

Countess said nothing—"If there is no alternative, I must share the fate, even though it be worse than it is, of my mother and sisters. I must dwell with them—work with them—starve with them, if it must be so—anything rather than give them up. I am told to 'honour my father and mother,' and surely you would not have me break God's commandments? I thank you, from my heart I thank you, for all you have done for me. I grieve to repay you thus; but you no longer leave it in my power to prove my gratitude. If I have spoken rudely, I beg your pardon; but I cannot hear my mother insulted with impunity. I do not love her the less because I have only just discovered her. She will receive me, and love me—therefore I have a home, and a happy one in prospect; still I should be thankful if I could go thither, with, at least, your good wishes."

Clare stood a moment, silent; but her aunt's anger was at its height. She re-

strained it, however, and motioning Clare to the door, merely said, with cold politeness—

“ You have made your choice : I have no more to say. My carriage and servants shall convey you *home*, if you desire it—but I have no wish to see you again.”

She bent stiffly, and Clare returned her salute, as stiffly, for her aunt's want of feeling, steeled her heart, and she even wished that she had not conceded as much as she had done. Indeed, had she not promised her mother to act with consideration—and that mother and her words were before her during the past scene—she would scarcely have spoken as calmly as she did ; but would, at once, have deeply resented her aunt's conduct. She now walked slowly out of the room, without speaking again, and retired to meditate upon what course she had better pursue.

When she reached her own room, and had bolted herself in, her over-wrought feelings gave way, and a flood of tears

proved that she was grieved for having offended her aunt. She soon dried them, feeling angry with herself for shedding them, when she considered the heartless selfishness of her for whom they fell. The more she thought over the unnatural harshness of the Countess's conduct, the more disgusted she became, and the more reconciled she felt to her own share in the proceedings. As far as self was concerned, she knew she should be happier with her mother and sister than with her aunt, but still she regretted leaving one who had been kind to her, in the perfect solitude of her own luxury, which, though affording every merely personal comfort, could give no real happiness. Not that she imagined her aunt to be a person who would deeply regret any loss that merely concerned her feelings, if she could reconcile it to her pride. This she would, doubtless, manage to do in the present instance, by throwing the blame upon her niece, and charging

her with ingratitude. She asked herself whether she could make any further effort to reinstate herself in her aunt's favour, but every feeling of her soul revolted from the attempt. She could not, would not, stoop to one who had acted as she had done.

Whilst Clare sat and thought, and thought over her past conduct and its consequences, the principal sensation she experienced was that of joy—joy at the prospect of living for ever with those she could love and esteem, and who would, in return, love, if they could not esteem, her. She indulged, for some time, in this pleasant dream; but, as is the case in all visions, there was a sudden change; or rather a shadow passed over the brightness of the sunshine she was picturing. It was a shade, and a gloomy one, from the changing and uncertain orb of love. Even as the shadow of the wandering moon will, sometimes, come between us and the

constant sun, to obscure his brightness, so did this shadow eclipse, for a moment, the happiness of Clare. She must bid farewell, for ever, to Lord Hastings ; and in this period of uncertainty, he presented himself to her mind, dearer, far dearer, than he had ever been before. Yet she had declared to her aunt that those friends were worthless who would value her, merely for her position in society and supposed fortune ; and she had thought so then ; but how fluctuating is the tide of human sentiment. Now she deeply regretted that he, the only person whose opinion or regard she had cared for, for some time past, would be estranged from her, by the very circumstances in which she gloried. He might think unkindly of her too, which was worse than all—he might hear of her as an ungrateful, unfeeling girl ; and without knowing the true reasons for her conduct, might add her to those worthless characters of whom she

had often heard him speak with disgust. And she had no means of undeceiving him. Besides, were he to see her conduct in its real light, she would be as far removed from him as ever, since the poor, fatherless child of the Mrs. Llewellyn of Craigyvellyn, and the sister of the Welsh harpress, would be soon forgotten by the noble Earl of Hastings. It was cruel, she thought, that it must be so, and her heart felt a bitter pang, when she figured to herself the distance that now lay between the proud nobleman, and the humble Clare Llewellyn.

She would have died rather than that any one should know why those slow, creeping, languid, but melancholy tears overflowed her brilliant eyes. She would have suffered ten thousand deaths rather than that the Earl of Hastings should ever know their source; yet they flowed for him. They were to be the first and last. She dashed them from her eyes, and drew

herself up in maiden dignity and pride, as Clare Llewellen was wont to do.

“Have I not found a mother and sisters, and shall I care to lose one who is, perhaps, scarcely my friend?” she said.

Oh! what resolutions does the breast of woman undergo! and who knows, who can see, what that poor solitary hiding-place of the feelings and affections, so often encloses?

Again Clare was aroused by a tap at the door, and the voice of Louise. She said she could not admit her.

“A note from Miladi, Mademoiselle,” said Louise.

Clare half unclosed the door, took the note, and said she would ring for Louise when she required her services. The note was short and explicit. It said—

“The Countess Sforza’s carriage and servants will be at Miss Llewellen’s service whenever she wishes to leave

Bath. The Countess is too much indisposed to see Miss Llewellyn before her departure."

Clare tore the note in small pieces, with a smile of contempt, and scattered them over the room : then she rang the bell. Louise appeared.

" Louise," she said, " I should be obliged if you would assist me to pack up some of my clothes—I intend leaving this house to-night."

Louise looked astonishment ; but Clare was decided. Under her directions, Louise packed up her boxes, all of which Clare, in the fulness of her excitement, would fain have left behind her ; for she hated the idea of carrying away things that had been given her by her aunt ; but she must have necessary apparel. Her ball dresses, and such-like attire, however, she left in their wardrobes. Her jewels, with the exception of such trinkets as had been

presented by her friends, she gave into Louise's care, with directions to remit them to her aunt, when she was gone. Her money she knew she should want, and she, therefore, collected every farthing she possessed.

The packing was performed in a few hours. She then told Louise to order the carriage to be ready at daybreak, to convey her as far as Bristol, from whence she was resolved to proceed alone. She did not wish to asperse her aunt's character by leaving her house in a manner unsuitable to her niece, but further than this, she would accept no benefit at her hands. She then wrote a few brief lines of cold leave-taking, respectfully worded, but nothing more, which she gave to Louise.

The poor girl was in tears. She did not know what to make of these proceedings. Clare had been ever very kind to her, but had never made her a confidante, therefore she dared not, even on the present occasion, be inquisitive. She could only

entreat to be made of service, but received a gentle but firm assurance, that she could be of none further than to assist her young lady in packing.

Clare did not sleep or even lie down that night. At eight o'clock the next morning, she found herself in a hotel at Bristol. No persuasions that the faithful coachman could urge would induce her to retain the carriage. He took and paid her passage, saw her on board a steamer, committed her with a handsome fee to the care of the captain, and left her for the first time in her life, alone, and wholly abandoned to her own resources.

CHAPTER III.

Oh ! we are querulous creatures ! little less
Than all things can suffice to make us happy :
And little more than nothing is enough
To discontent us.

COLERIDGE.

It may be imagined that when Clare was left alone in the vessel, her condition was not very comfortable. She had never before travelled without a protector, and she knew not which way to turn for support. She began to regret that she had not made her journey by land, which would have been a more respectable, if not so expeditious a

mode. But it was too late to repent. She had taken her passage, and she must bear the consequences of her imprudence. She was evidently an object of attention, for when she went on deck, feeling sick, and harassed, and longing for the fresh air, the eyes of all the passengers were turned upon her. She had recourse to a small ladies' cabin, which she was fortunate in having, for some time, to herself; but by degrees the few females who were on board joined her. She felt nervous and agitated; her head ached with the excitement she had gone through; and the changes that had so suddenly occurred in her existence, as well as her present position, seemed like a dream.

The ladies were civil enough, but so very different from the people to whom she had been accustomed, that their politeness was rather irksome than otherwise, though she felt thankful for the protection their presence afforded. They were inquisitive, too, and no wonder, since the appearance

of so elegant and beautiful a girl, alone on ship board, excited various surmises. She was, however, obliged to accept their offer of accompanying them on deck, for the heat and closeness of the cabin were insufferable. Here she was addressed by a gentleman of superior bearing and polished manners, who appeared to take pity of her youth and inexperience, and whose white hairs and kind, though fidgetty attentions, won her confidence. They talked about Wales, and in the course of conversation, the gentleman asked her whether she knew anything of such a place as Glanheathyn. She started, hesitated, and at last said she knew it well by name. He said he was on his way thither, and proceeded to make inquiries concerning a Mr. Lloyd and a Mrs. Llewellen who he wished to find out. Claræ satisfied him.

By degrees, and as mutual confidence increased; that confidence which arises sometimes, naturally, between comparative strangers of similar birth and notions. Clara

said that she was the daughter of the lady he was in search of, and was then on her way to Craigyvellyn. The stranger appeared surprised, but deeply interested. He begged her not to impute his inquiries to idle curiosity, but he would take the liberty of asking whether her name were Gwonthlean. She replied in the negative, but said she had a sister so called. The gentleman remarked that their meeting was a strange one, for that, although personally unknown to her family, he had communications of singular moment to make to them.

He then proceeded to relate a history, which, as my readers are already acquainted with it, I shall not repeat. He proved to be the English captive of whom I have spoken, and to whom Herbert Llewellen gave the letters for his friends, in the bandit's cave amongst the Appenines. His communication, as may be supposed, deeply interested Clare. By it she discovered a secret, which, although she had

suspected it, had never been disclosed to her—that Herbert and Gwenthlean were attached to each other. She learnt that the friend she esteemed was, perhaps, alive, but in a more melancholy condition than she could have well conceived; a condition to which death would be preferable, and she found that there was still increased misery in store for a sister she ardently loved.

The stranger had told his story with tact and delicacy, but he saw that Clare was moved.

“I am sorry,” he said, “to have pained you—but, perhaps, you would bear this intelligence better than your sister, or the grandfather the unfortunate young man mentioned.”

Clare said that she felt more for others than herself, since, from circumstances, she had been comparatively little acquainted with Herbert; but that she dreaded the effect the disclosures would have upon his dearer friends. She added that it would

be necessary to make them with discretion.

They talked long and widely upon the subject, and the gentleman asked Clare whether she knew to what Welsh family of Llewellens Herbert belonged. Clare was wholly unacquainted with his early history, and replied in the negative.

"I scarcely know why I make the inquiry," pursued the stranger, "since it is, like other Welsh names, so universal that there may be fifty Llewellens all unconnected. But I am, myself, one of this numerous family, and the word Llewellen, in Italy, struck upon my ear like a voice from home; and although I knew to the contrary I could not help imagining that I must have discovered a relative in the forlorn captive of the robbers' cave."

Clare looked inquisitive, but good manners forbade her making any direct inquiry. The gentleman satisfied her, however, by saying that he was Colonel Llewellen, of whom, though her name-sake, she could

know nothing, since he had resided in India for the last forty years, and was just returned, like others of his calibre, to find all his friends and acquaintances dead, or unmindful of him. He believed he had one very distant cousin residing in Bath, whom he had intended visiting, had not his mind been so much occupied by his adventure with Herbert, that he could not rest until he had delivered his letters and messages to his friends in Wales. He had, therefore, written to his relative from Bristol, to inform her that his visit to her would be delayed some little time, owing to matters which called him elsewhere.

“Another discovery!” thought Clare, as she listened to her new friend’s most free and open communications, “this is my ninety-ninth cousin, Colonel Llewellen,” but she made no remark, not choosing to disclose herself as the niece of the Countess Sforza he alluded to.

This rather curious meeting, naturally placed Colonel Llewellen in the situation

of Clare's protector during the rest of their voyage, which, under his care, terminated very agreeably. He was evidently immensely struck with the young lady he had thus strangely stumbled upon, and was as officious as any old bachelor of sixty could possibly be. He took upon himself to reprimand her if she would not guard herself against the weather, and effectually prevented the approach of any passenger who wished to make acquaintance with the handsome girl.

She soon discovered that the old Nabob was a bit of a fidget. He fussed and scolded the captain and sailors; launched forth in invectives against England and her atmosphere, which he declared enough to kill anybody in six weeks; and lauded the luxuries and heat of India to the skies. He wondered that he had ever returned, since there was no one left alive in whom he felt an interest, and, vowed over and over again, that he should soon go back to the east. Then he railed at man and

womankind, saying that he had found little but selfishness and ingratitude in the one sex, and folly and vanity in the other. He was evidently a solitary, and rather misanthropic being ; misanthropic, at least, because solitary. But he was so kind, considerate, and gentleman-like, that Clare quite liked him ; and she was not a girl to take sudden fancies. Besides, he was very good-natured to some little children, and one or two poor invalids, to whom she saw him, privately, give money, whilst he told them that they would never get well in such a horrid, foggy air.

When they arrived, and landed at Craigyvellyn, Clare invited Colonel Llew-ellen to accompany her, at once, to her mother's house, which he accordingly did. There were ushered into the drawing-room by Miriam, who said her mistress was upstairs. Clare begged Colonel Llew-ellen to excuse her for a few moments, and followed Miriam, to her evident astonishment, to Gwenthlean's room. She entered,

and found her mother and Gwenthlean sitting by the sick-bed of her younger sister, upon whose face appeared symptoms of increased weakness. They uttered a cry of joyful surprise, as they perceived her, and rushed towards her to press her, alternately, in their arms.

“I am so glad you are come,” murmured the suffering child, as Clare stooped over her bed to kiss her; “you will fill my place, and comfort them; for I am going away.”

This was a melancholy greeting, and Clare gazed with painful earnestness upon the now flushed cheek of the patient speaker, who smiled upon her with the smile of an angel. She had not time for inquiries or thought, as she was obliged to make a hasty sketch of her rupture with her aunt, her departure from Bath, and consequent meeting with Colonel Llewellyn, and his visit to the cottage. She omitted to mention his communication concerning Herbert, before Gwenthlean, but begged

her to go with her to the drawing-room for a few minutes, to be introduced to him, and to remain with him whilst she tried to recover from the excitement and pleasure of meeting. Gwenthlean hesitated, for she was shy, but Clare urged the point, and they went together.

Colonel Llewellen greeted Gwenthlean kindly, almost affectionately, for he looked upon her pale face, and delicate figure, as upon the wreck of youth and health, occasioned, perhaps, by the fate of her lover. Clare left them, to go and tell her mother of Herbert, which she did as clearly as she could, saying that Colonel Llewellen had come to give the information personally. Lady Llewellen was overwhelmed by the intelligence. It had been dreadful to believe Herbert dead; it was worse to labour under a fearful uncertainty.

"I hope he will not tell Gwenthlean," she said, "but will leave it for you."

"Certainly not," replied Clare. "But,

dearest mamma, were they betrothed to one another."

"Not exactly betrothed," said Lady Llewellen, "but we must not talk of this now—God knows we have much to suffer."

"You are not angry with me for returning, dearest mother," said Clare, anxiously. "When you know everything, I do not think you will blame me."

"Angry, my love; oh, no. You could scarcely, if you loved us do otherwise. But, my child, you are come home to suffering and misery. All your energies will be required, and your life will be changed."

Lady Llewellen glanced with agony at the bed upon which lay her youngest born. Clare understood her, and a tear filled her eye. Lizzie appeared to be sleeping, but there were tears upon her cheeks also.

"Oh! she cannot—she will not!" exclaimed Clare; "so young, and sweet and lovely. But I can do everything now."

You need not fear me. With you and Gwenthlean to teach me, I am equal to every exertion."

"May God bless and teach you, my love;" said Lady Llewellen. "He can alone guide us aright, and support us in trial. To Him be the praise for your return to us; and to Him let us endeavour to commit my blessed, saint-like child, already ripe for heaven."

"Oh! do not talk so," said Clare, "she will be better soon. Look at the exquisite hue upon her cheeks. They are bright as the freshest of roses."

Lady Llewellen shook her head mournfully, and covered her face with her hands to hide the gathering tear. But she remembered Gwenthlean, and calling Miriam to watch by Lizzie, begged Clare to accompany her to Colonel Llewellen.

They found Gwenthlean in an agony of tears. Colonel Llewellen had told her all; imprudently, perhaps, but he had recollected Herbert's injunctions to deliver the

papers into the hands of those to whom they were addressed, and he could not forbear doing so. Gwenthlean had listened at first, to his communications, as if she did not understand them. As the truth gradually broke upon her mind, a convulsive sensation deprived her of utterance, and it was long before she could speak. It was vain to try to conceal her feelings—they were too overpowering; and she sobbed aloud. Colonel Llewellen tried to comfort her; told her that Herbert might yet return; that he was better than he had been; that he was kindly tended; that he declared himself at peace and happy; and that he entreated his friends not to mourn for him. But all he said, only served to increase Gwenthlean's misery.

"Would that I were dead," she said, with a convulsive shudder, as she clasped the packet of letters in her hand.

Recollecting herself, and forgetting that the stranger knew all, she begged him to excuse her emotion, for Herbert and she

had been as brother and sister. But Colonel Llewellen did not know that she was now pledged to another, and that even hope of Herbert's final return, brought with it a maddening pang.

The entrance of Lady Llewellen and Clare put a stop to the conversation, for Clare, seeing her sister's agitation, led her gently from the room, leaving her mother to prosecute the subject. After a long conversation, Colonel Llewellen expressed a wish to proceed to Mr. Lloyd's, and Lady Llewellen sent for David, the harper, to accompany him. He said he should not leave the neighbourhood for some little time, as he was anxious to follow up an acquaintance so strangely begun, and hoped Lady Llewellen would allow him to call again.

She assured Colonel Llewellen of a welcome and a bed at the parsonage; and he took his leave, saying, that he trusted he should see the young ladies on the morrow.

Clare could make nothing of Gwenthlean. No sooner were they alone, than she became reserved, and turned the subject from Herbert to her aunt, and to Clare's history since they were last together. Clare knew so little of her sister, that she scarcely felt at liberty to probe her deeply, and there were so many engrossing matters for her thoughts, that she could not dwell wholly upon Herbert and Gwenthlean.

The state of the youngest sister, was, in itself, sufficient cause for anxiety and care. She seemed, indeed, as the little girl herself had said, sent to replace her. The anguish of her mother, the deep but subdued grief and melancholy of Gwenthlean, told her that they had small hope of her recovery.

How little had Clare imagined, a few months back, when she sympathized with the ladies Lovel for the loss of their brother, that she might have to mourn a similar loss herself. She had known little

of personal affliction ; nothing of death. She had never yet been deprived of a relative or friend. Her hour of trial was approaching, and she asked herself how she could bear it. She looked with astonishment at her newly-found relations. There was no sign of immoderate grief. Her mother suffered in silence, casting her glance from her child to the throne of God, and supplicating for resignation. Gwenthlean moved about like a spirit. Watched over her sister's every breath and every change with enduring love, but did not murmur. Lizzie lay like a fading lily, delicately beautiful. Patient, and with a lamb-like spirit of meekness, she smiled upon her friends; and said she did not suffer. Her young heart had been raised, by early training, and early piety, above the concerns of this world. She believed herself dying, and she was blest in being ready to die. Clare had never either witnessed or imagined anything like this.

This must be the religion that Herbert had meant ; the christianity that looked beyond the grave.

Before she retired to rest, she sat, awhile, alone with Lizzie, by her bedside, whilst her mother and Gwenthlean were engaged in making arrangements for her comfort. The little girl's mind appeared calm and happy as an infant's. They had been just kneeling round her bed in family worship, and a holy peace dwelt upon her countenance.

She spoke to Clare with a sweet but feeble voice, and held her hand, pressing it, from time to time, to her lips.

"I should like to have known you more, my sweet sister," she murmured ; "but I do not think I shall be here long. Do not tell them so ; but I am weaker to-day ; and I have had heavenly dreams."

Clare bent over her, and as she kissed her cheek, her tears fell upon it.

“You should not weep,” she continued; “for I am very, very happy. The merciful Saviour and the holy Angels are with me, and I am going to heaven. But you must comfort poor mamma, and Gwenthlean. God has sent you in my place, and you will be better than I. Oh! I have been wild and troublesome! but Gwenthlean is an angel, and taught me better things. But she is unhappy. I know she is unhappy, and you must try to make her happy. There is something on her heart, I know; and for all she prays for hours at night, and reads the Bible, she does not get comforted. You are older than I, and you can find out her trouble. And, Clare, I hope you will be like her, that I may meet you again, to live with you for ever and ever. Is it not a beautiful thought, that there is a home where we shall never be parted? Think of mamma, and Gwenthlean, and you, and I, all happy together for ever! Happy with the angels.

I saw them last night in my dreams. They had silver wings and shining garments, and faces like Gwenthlean's, but happier. Smiling, peaceful, joyous faces. Do not cry, my sister. The Saviour gathers the tender lambs within his arms. He took little children, and graciously blessed them; and He will forgive me, and take me to Himself."

There was a bright spot upon the young sufferer's cheek, and a supernatural brilliancy in her eye. Clare looked upon her with fearful love and admiration. She stretched out her arms towards her sister, and clasped them round her neck. Clare feared that the excitement of speaking so long had been too much, and whispered to her to be still. She smiled as she murmured—

"I may never speak to you again," and closed her eyes.

Clare looked at her, and listened anxiously for her breathing. She thanked

God that she could hear it ; gentle but regular.

In a few minutes, she was asleep, and when Gwenthlean, who was to watch in her room that night, came in, her slumbers seemed as painless and serene, as if she had never suffered.

CHAPTER IV.

Oh, sweet and strange it seems to me that ere this
day is done
The voice that now is speaking may be beyond the
sun—
For ever and for ever with those just souls and
true—
And what is life that we should ~~mean~~? why make
we such ado?

For ever and for ever, all in a blessed home,
And there to wait a little while till you and Effie
come,
To lie within the light of God, as I lie upon your
breast,
And the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary
are at rest.

TENNYSON.

LADY LLEWELLEN and Clare had retired

to rest, and Lizzie still slept profoundly. Gwenthlean alone watched and wept. Hour after hour sounded from the clock, and told of the regular march of time, which neither tarries nor hastens for grief or joy : yet she moved not from her meditations. She sat upon a low seat by the fire, with a dim night-lamp by her side, and Herbert's papers around her. Now she read a small, disjointed, half-illegible sentence ; now she covered her face with her hands, and wept. She was attired in a loose dressing-gown, and her long hair fell in dishevelled luxuriance to her waist. Sometimes, she glanced towards the bed upon which lay her sister, to see whether the smothered sob that crept from her heart, had aroused her ; and, sometimes, she clasped her hands, and upturned her eyes towards Heaven.

As she read the wandering effusions of Herbert's captivity, and saw how fondly he loved her still, she groaned in spirit, and inwardly pronounced herself the doomed

of Heaven. She was now another's. *He* had asked her of her mother, and was received as her accepted lover. He urged immediate marriage, upon plea of restoring Lizzie by taking her to Italy, and there was no loop-hole of escape. She had promised, nay, almost sworn to be his; and if she did not fulfil her promise, Mr. Lloyd was ruined.

She could not, dared not, break it.. And if she did, Herbert was probably, even then, no more, and could never, if alive, escape from that horrible prison. Her mind was racked with misery. There appeared nothing either present or future to afford a ray of comfort, but the hope of an early grave. She wished herself stretched, instead of her beloved sister, upon a dying-bed, and like her, rejoicing in the prospect of a happy eternity. Dearly as she loved that sister, she could not pray for her life. Existence had been so full of wretchedness to her, that to die young seemed perfect felicity. She had fought so long against

her feelings, and against the pressure of poverty and anguish, that her spirit appeared broken, and she felt as if she could now only allow herself to be borne, like a withered leaf upon the river, unresistingly down the stream of fate.

One by one she read and re-read the fragments that had been given to her. There were many, but they were wholly unconnected, and evidently written at long intervals, and sometimes with much difficulty. A few of them may not be without interest to the reader, and we will take them up, as Gwenthlean did, and as they were placed, without date or design :

“ TO GWENTHLEAN.”

“ I think of you and pray for you always, my Gwenthlean. There is one little streak of light stealing through the cavern ; softly, quietly, mercifully. It is like you. A pure and heavenly minister

of comfort to the sick and wretched. It creeps towards my bed, like a friend, but stealthily, as if afraid of those dreadful men. So you would creep, my Gwenthean ; but love and christian charity would make you come.

Oppressive is this cavern's lonely gloom ;
And heavy is the unsunned atmosphere ;
I am as one enwrapt in living tomb,
No light without—no light within to cheer.
Said I, no light within ? one ray is here,
By God unto my weary spirit given,
That makes this melancholy cave appear
But a dark passage through life's murky even,
That leads me upwards to the eternal day of Heaven.

Rise, then, my soul, nor let thy fleshly chains
Bind thee so closely unto worldly things ;
Shake off the burden of oppressive pains ;
Seize thy white garments and eternal wings ;

Mount ever, like the grateful lark that sings
At heaven's gate, and let thy notes of praise
Out sound the groans of human sufferings ;
Fix on the sun of righteousness thy gaze :
Leave earth's dull fields behind, and soar the heavenly
ways.

Poor Fido! thou art more pitiful than
thy masters. The bandits' dog shares not
the bandits' hate. Thou comest to lick
my hand, and to fawn upon me. Thy
soft, loving eyes look fondly on the lonely
captive, and thy low whine seems to ex-
press pity for his hard fate. Like a true
friend, thou dost not despise this wretched
pallet, but visitest it often, as gladly as if
it were a prince's resting place.

Margarita has brought me a wild-flower

that seems to have a voice from home. It tells of spring. How beautiful was the spring at Glanheathyn! How joyous every living creature! How fresh and young all nature! How happily my childhood's spring passed away amongst the mountains of my native land. Less magnificent, but oh! ten thousand times more dear, than the Alps or Appenines. These dreadful Appenines, that close me in on every side, and frown, in gloomy grandeur, upon their forlorn prisoner. Give me patience and resignation, oh my God."

"Why did the yearnings of restless ambition, and the desire to excel others, take me from my quiet home, by the glorious sea? Why could I not have lived and died there as my beloved grandfather did? Then I might have lived and died with Gwenthlean, and the friends I love. Dreams! idle dreams! from which there must be an awaking. We live a life of

self-deception, till something dreadful arouses us to consciousness. Did not my heart, whose quiet promptings I resisted, tell me that the wisdom of the wise was but foolishness, and that humility, alone, was acceptable before God. Not in theological disputations—not in learned difficulties,—not in the praise of men, lies the pastor's duty ; but in a lowly walk with God ; a conduct irreproachable before men ; a tender anxiety to save sinners ; a constant endeavour to preach the gospel in purity ; a close, unprejudiced study of the bible, apart from tradition ; and earnest prayer. Why was I blinded to this, before the rod of the Almighty brought me low ?”

My brain has been sadly wandering to-day. Fever is a terrible leveller. It brings the strong man to the grave, and the mighty intellect to nothing. Where are the powers in which my soul once gloried ! Where are the giant limbs of the giant mind ! Memory, imagination, reason,

where are they! Dim and indistinct as the fitful, shadowy forms of a disturbed dream. Yet I have been happy, for I have fancied myself at home. I saw Gwenthlean and her mother and sister. They were kind, and gentle, and beautiful as ever.—But I was unhappy too; for I thought Gwenthlean was false. I believed she had forsaken me for another. Could it be? May she be happy if she love him. They must all suppose me dead, and may be gradually forgetting me—at least remembering me as a departed friend for whom it is useless to mourn. Oh! how the affections overpower every other attribute of man, in times of suffering and solitude.”

“Margarita tells me that the captain is said to be out of danger. Thank God! not only on my own account but his. The blood of a fellow-creature lies not at my

door, and he is spared for repentance. The Bandits still scowl heavily upon me, and my doom is uncertain. I could almost pray them to shorten my life of misery, but I supplicate patience to await God's appointed time. How truly said Menander -- 'Life to a wretched man is long ; but to him that is happy, very short.' I seem to have lived longer in these months of captivity, than in all the years of my previous life."

"One of the bandits has left his watch behind him. Its unvarying, tick, tick, tick, tick, used to remind me of the flight of time, and to warn me to improve it. How often was the warning given in vain! Now it goes to my heart, like a sharp sword, and tells me that Time is going on—on—like a mighty river that never flows back to its source. The past, from my natal hour to this wretched moment, is not to

be recalled. Oh! how infinitely precious would every moment have appeared, had I known what was to befall me. That monotonous sound goes on; never ceasing from day to day; like my sad captivity."

"As fire and heat are inseparable, so are the hearts of faithful friends," said Aristotle—yes, I believe it was Aristotle. Oh, my beloved, absent friends, are not our hearts as inseparable as fire and heat? Could you see how mine burns for you all: could you know how it prays for you all—how it dwells upon the recollection of the hours spent with you, you would shed one more tear to my memory, and learn how well I have loved you."

"Hoarsely, wildly, fearfully, rages the

storm without. Coldly rushes the wind up the cavern. It is a dreadful night. A night for fierce deeds, for such as dare to try its power. The thunder shakes the Appenines. A flash of lightning pierces the mouth of the cave, and gleams across the arms and weapons. It darts past me—quivers—and all is darkness. Great art Thou, oh! God, in all Thy works; but wondrous great in the mighty tempest.”

“Margarita is changed. She is humbled. She is bowed to the dust with grief. Shame on the villain who wronged her. Shame on the coward, whoever he be, who trifles with, or betrays her who trusts in him. The combat is unequal. Strength with weakness, like the wolf and the lamb. Woman clings to man as the ivy to the forest tree; and, when he flings her from him, a blast of the tempest should strike, wither, and

destroy him. That blast will come, if not here, hereafter. Poor Margarita! beautiful, innocent, and happy, to be blighted like a flower! "*Vengeance is mine,*" saith the Lord!" May Gwenthlean never have her pure mind tainted by the knowledge, even, of wickedness such as this. Angels guard her and hers."

"Gwenthlean," murmured a low voice, as this last fragment was read, and re-read, until it was wet and blotted with the tears that fell over it.

Gwenthlean started, and for a moment almost fancied, Herbert was calling her. Her name was once more feebly repeated. She rose and went towards her sister's bed, who had awaked from her deep sleep, and was calling her.

"Lie your head upon my pillow, dear;" said Lizzie, "that I may speak to you. Was it a dream, or was it real? I heard

that Herbert was alive, and I fancied I saw him. Gwenthlean, I think he will come back again, and make you happy. I have prayed very, very often that he might return; and I feel that he will, for your sake and his own. You are too good, dearest, to be unhappy."

"Do not talk so, love," said Gwenthlean; "I am not good. Oh! God knows I am not good."

"Yes, Gwenthlean, you are very good: nobody but I can tell how good—and God. I am young, but sickness has made me think, and I know you have suffered. But do not be cast down. There is happiness coming for you, yet."

"Not in this world, my Lizzie," said Gwenthlean, whilst a sob involuntarily burst from her overladen breast.

"Even in this world, if God pleases, with whom nothing is impossible. You will not mourn very much for me, dearest, will you, when I am gone? You would not, if you knew how happy I feel. I saw

such a beautiful form in my sleep just now. I think it was an angel. Not a real angel, perhaps, but a vision. Do you not think God sends his holy angels to guard us, and that I may have seen one come to take me in her arms to paradise? No snow was so white and shining as her garments. Promise me not to sorrow very much, if I go away to-night. I feel so strong and yet so weak. I never felt so before. Something in my spirit and not in my body. Oh! they are so different. Say you will not mourn!"

"Lizzie, Lizzie, you will break my heart," sobbed Gwenthlean, throwing her arms around her sister.

"No, no; do not speak so. Do not soil the brightness of my joy, by a tear. They say years are as days in heaven, so I shall see you again in a few, a very few days."

"Hours, I hope, my darling sister," murmured Gwenthlean. "We shall not long be parted. No, oh! no! If God would offer you to me now I would not take your

pure soul away from Him. Go to Him whilst you are unstained, untried by this wicked hard world : whilst you can offer your young heart a pure sacrifice to its Creator and Redeemer ; but not to-night. Oh! not to-night."

"And why not to-night?" said the suffering child, in a voice almost inaudible from weakness. "Is not every hour a gain that we spend in heaven? If I were sure that mamma, my dear, blessed mamma, would not grieve for me very much, I should like to die now—just as we are, Gwenthlean—in your arms. Die as I have lived, with you."

"Oh, that we could both die, and be translated to glory together," said Gwenthlean, whose self-command was failing her, and who wept bitterly.

"Think of our mother—our new sister—of Herbert," murmured Lizzie. "You must live for them. Tell Herbert when he comes back, that I loved him dearly to the last. Oh Gwenthlean, do not cry so sadly.

This is not like you. Think who said,
 "Suffer the little children to come unto
 me." "And am I not going to Him?"

Lizzie's countenance was lighted up with
 an extraordinary brilliance, and as Gwent-
 thean rose, and looked at her, she almost
 fancied her already an angel.

"Will you try to sing me that beautiful
 hymn," she said. "I should like to hear
 you sing once more. I have heard heavenly
 music to night; oh such rapturous music.
 I mean Bishop Heber's hymn. I think I
 I could sing it. Let me try—

"Thou art gone to the grave but we will not deplore
 thee,

Though sorrow and darkness encompass the tomb;
 The Saviour has passed through its portals before
 thee,

And the lamp of His love is thy guide through
 the gloom."

Whilst the little girl sang feebly, but
 with inexpressible sweetness, these words,
 Gwenthean sunk on her knees, and prayed.

The unwonted sounds aroused their mother, ever keenly alive to all that passed in their room. She rose immediately and, followed by Clara, who slept with her, entered, and saw one child with her eyes upturned, murmuring forth this hymn joyfully, and the other with her face buried in the bed, endeavouring to stifle the sob that would not be repressed.

Lizzie stretched out her arms towards her mother, and said—

“Oh! will you sing for me, and pray for me, mother dear. My voice is failing; but I hear the voices of the angels, and their songs are very sweet.”

“Hush! my love;” said Lady Llewellen, “you are excited, and must be quiet. Lie down, and compose yourself, and we will stay by you.”

“Then let me whisper it in your ear,” said the little girl faintly, “just one word, and then I will rest.”

Lady Llewellen bent her head down, and Lizzie murmured—

“ I think I am going soon to heaven, up amongst the stars, to see the glory of God.”

She appeared to be wandering, but there was something so unearthly in her voice that her mother was, for a moment, paralyzed, and Clara gazed upon her with a fixed and terrified look, whilst her heart and pulse beat violently, and she was almost suffocated with the gathering tears and sobs. There was a beautiful smile on the child's face, and an unutterably peaceful expression in her eye. She clasped her small thin hands together, and looked upwards; then she turned her eyes upon her friends. She was not long for this world. Her spirit was hovering on the verge of life. But what a blessed state was hers! Fearlessly she confided her soul to her Maker, and trustingly she looked beyond the grave. With child-like faith and simplicity she believed in God's power to save, and no mist of doubt or error, had ever clouded the purity of her

religion. Her head rested on her mother's breast, and her sisters knelt on each side, whilst Miriam, her faithful nurse, who had now joined the solemn group stood near her.

"You will give me to God, mamma?" she whispered, when her mother's tears fell on her cheek.

"Yes, my own love," said her mother, "if it be His blessed will."

Clare's sobs were audible.

"Tell her it is God's pleasure: that she must not weep, for I shall soon be with Him for ever and for ever. Kiss me, dear, dear mother. Where is Gwenthlean?—bless you all—all. God bless them—mamma—Gwenthlean—Mr. Lloyd—Herbert—Clare—Miriam—all."

The little girl ceased to speak. She appeared to fall into a sweet sleep. Motionless they remained around her, and the silence of the tomb was in the little chamber. She breathed softly, and with her gentle breathing, the hectic flush came and

went. Fainter and fainter was its hue. First like the rose in her summer glory, then in her autumn blush; then as when the first frost hath touched her. They watched the colour fade, thus gradually from her cheeks, until again her eye unclosed, and turned upwards. Her lips moved, and she murmured a few faint words. The lamp flickered on the table; for it had been long untrimmed. A wavering light, a hissing sound, and it was extinguished. The bright winter moon gleamed serenely through the half closed curtains. Softly and tenderly her rays reposed upon the face of the dying child—that face now pale as the lily. The breathing had ceased to be audible. The head had sunk back. The clasped hands had relaxed. One groan from the bereaved parent told that the pure spirit had left its frail earthly dwelling-place, and was seeking a home with saints and angels, in the full light of the mansions of its God.

CHAPTER V.

The wise and active conquer difficulties
By daring to attempt them : sloth and folly
Shiver and shrink at sight of toil and hazard,
And make the impossibility they fear.

Rowe.

Worse than idle is compassion
If it end in tears and sighs ;
Thee from bondage would I rescue,
And from vile indignities ;
Nurtured, as thy mien bespeaks, in high degree,
Look up—and help a hand that longs to set thee
free.

WORDSWORTH.

WHEN Herbert Llewellyn was left in the
bandits' cave by his fellow-countryman,

neither he nor Margarita had any hope of his ever rising from the wretched pallet, to which fever, and ill-tended wounds, had so long confined him. As to eventual escape he had never given it a thought. Month succeeded month, however, and, contrary either to his expectations or wishes, he gradually regained some portion of strength. The bandits had been little in the cavern, and had, therefore, left him, comparatively at rest, to the kind tending of Margarita, who lost no opportunity of benefiting him. When a second spring began to dawn upon his captivity, he was able to sit at the mouth of the cavern, and breathe something of life and health from the mountain air that swept by it. Margarita stood without to watch the return of the bandits, and to give warning if they appeared suddenly.

Whilst Herbert resigned himself to a foreign grave, her active mind was ever busy. Day and night she plotted and planned, without counsel, the means of

escape. She could not make Herbert a participator in her plans, because the least excitement increased his weakness, and had he believed escape possible, his mind would have dwelt upon the one idea, to the injury of his body. The bandits still trusted him, implicitly, to Margarita's care, whose skilful evasion of their questions prevented their suspecting her real designs. They came more frequently to the cave than they had at first done, and Margarita listened eagerly to their conversation, in the hope of discovering their daily plans. They made her constantly useful when they were in the cave, and had it not been for Guilio, she would have been their common slave. He continued kind, both to her and Herbert, and brought them many necessaries that were most acceptable to them. But she had seldom the means of speaking apart with him, as she was always pretty narrowly watched. She made, frequently, excursions amongst the mountains on all sides of her, but dared not

wander far, lest she should lose her way back. So intricate, however, were all the approaches to the cavern, that she sought in vain for any means of escape. The mountains were trackless, and the rocks and brushwood not to be threaded.

Herbert recovered by degrees beyond her best hopes. The Captain was also restored, and one day visited the cavern, and scowled so darkly upon Herbert, that all her fears were roused. She saw him consulting about him, with the others, and from the few words of their conversation that she heard, she was persuaded that mischief was brewing. She formed a desperate resolution, and resolved, by following the bandits, to find out their road to the cave. She was rich in fairy lore, and had read of how one woman found her way out of a labyrinth by unwinding a skein of silk, as she went along, and fixing it to the bushes; how a man had been taken into a wood to be killed by wild beasts, but had dropped white pebbles on his way

blither, and by their means, returned to his home again ; but neither of these expedients were of avail to her. She thought of many others, and at last determined to try the following. She mixed a quantity of black paint, the ingredients for which she procured through Gaiho, and with a brush, set out on her perilous expeditions.

With a palpitating heart, she allowed the bandits to leave the cavern, then followed them at a distance, sometimes directed by a glance of their persons, and at others by the sound of their voices, and at others by the prints of their shoes. Wherever there was a doubtful turning, she made a hasty mark with her paint, upon some stone, rock, or tree, carefully concealing it as soon as made, and hurrying on. If she was astonished by the extreme intricacy of the way, she was still more so, when she saw how near the cave was to a public mountain thoroughfare beneath. She followed the bandits until they arrived

at the top of the defile down which Herbert and his friends had seen them appear, and when she had watched them until they were out of sight, she turned again. The way, though short, was a confused labyrinth of brushwood, rocks, mountain passes, precipices, and broken paths, all of which intercepted one another, so as to be perfectly undiscoverable to any but the initiated. As Margarita returned, she skilfully enlarged her marks, and made others, and impressed upon her mind every turning as deeply as she could. When she again reached the cave, and told Herbert what she had done, she thought he would have gone mad with joy. The chance of escape had never occurred to him, and now he fell upon his knees and thanked God for it—then he kissed Margarita's hand, and overpowered her with expressions of admiration and gratitude. He declared himself well enough to set out at once, but Margarita entreated him to be calm, and to wait till after the departure

of the bandits the next day, as she knew they were to return to the cave that night. The bandits came back, as Margarita predicted, but set out at break of day, and when about an hour had elapsed, Herbert and she prepared to follow them. They both wore the Neapolitan costume, and carried wallets of provisions. Margarita had also managed to procure a small sum of money, and they each armed themselves with stilettoes and pistols, in case of urgent necessity ; for they knew too well that as soon as their escape was discovered, they would be pursued on all sides. With faltering steps and beating hearts, they left the cavern, gazing furtively around, as if already in danger. Margarita led the way, and their progress was very slow, for she was obliged to examine every rock and bush with extreme caution and minuteness, lest she should lose her marks, and thereby, the track.

When Herbert saw the mazy, intersected way they were gradually threading, its

difficulties and even dangers, he no longer wondered that the haunt of the bandits was still unexplored. He was only astonished that Margarita could have had strength and courage to discover it. Now they were arrested by a thick underwood of brambles, through which it appeared impossible to pass, but which they crossed by slow degrees, and by following irregular stones that had evidently been laid there designedly, and upon which Margarita had made her marks. Again they found themselves lost amongst a number of jutting rocks, apparently thrown together without aim, but through which, by innumerable windings and turnings, they came to an opening amongst the mountains. Here, again, they would, inevitably, have been lost, but for Margarita's dark signals, which, assisted by her memory, she managed to find as she went. Path intersecting path at one place ; at another a wild expanse of rock, without the appearance of a footstep. Once they heard at a distance

the horn of the bandits. Margarita seized Herbert's arm, and declared that all was over, for they must be returning. But some time afterwards it sounded again, and the sound was more distant, which gave them courage to proceed.

At last they had traversed this hideous and inaccessible labyrinth, and found themselves at the top of the fatal defile. It was with feelings of dread they entered it, fearing to be surprised by the enemy, but they descended it safely, and reached the spot at which Herbert was taken prisoner. They thanked God for having come thus far, and looked about them to discover how to proceed. New difficulties opened before them, for there was no direct path, and they knew not how to reach the beaten track. They committed themselves to the guidance of a Higher Power, and after wandering about for some time, found what appeared a rough mountain thoroughfare. They followed it for several miles, until evening broke upon them, and reminded

them that they had to seek shelter for the night. None seemed to be near, and there was no appearance of a human being. Nothing but Nature, in her stern grandeur. They looked about for a resting-place, as they wandered on, and at last perceived, up amongst the mountains, what seemed a habitation. They dragged their weary steps towards it, but found it uninhabited. It was a kind of barn or stable, scarcely tenantable.

Here, however, they rested, agreeing that one should watch whilst the other slept. Herbert insisted upon Margarita's taking the first sleep, and he stretched his loose cloak upon the ground for her, whilst he sat at the opening and watched. Overpowered by fatigue, she did not awake, and Herbert was thankful for it, as the excitement of his feelings would have prevented him from sleeping. His thoughts were busy with distant friends, and hopes of re-union.

Again that dreaded horn sounded in the

distance : not so distant, he thought, as when they had last heard it. He crept towards Margarita, and awoke her gently. She arose, heavy with sleep, and asked where she was. Herbert murmured, "The Bandits," and she was aroused in an instant. He told her of the horn, and she said they must leave their place of shelter instantly, and seek concealment until the morning. They wandered forth in the uncertain light of a few faint stars, and scrambled about the mountain, until they came to a thicket, which, though near the shed, offered concealment. They entered it, and crouched down amongst the bushes. They had not been there long, when they distinctly heard voices. Margarita soon recognized two of the bandits. Breathlessly they listened, and a terrible fear came over them.

"Let us try the shed," said one of the voices, as the men paused, to consult near the thicket. "We can get a better nap there than here, though bad's the best."

“There’s not a soul stirring to-night,” said the other, “no hope of gain that I see; so we will just take a glass and a nap, for want of something better to do.”

The bandits moved off, and the fugitives breathed again.

“They have not discovered our flight,” said Margarita. “We must hasten on.”

They crept softly through the bushes, in a contrary direction to the shed, and once more found themselves on the bare mountain, down which they hastened, as well as the darkness would permit. They knew not what course to pursue. If they moved on, they might come in contact with the bandits; if they remained in any place of concealment, morning might discover them. On they went, however, as best they might.

At last morning dawned—and such a morning! Rosy streaks of light crowned the peaks of the Appenines, and the east looked joyful as a smiling, golden-haired infant. Herbert glanced upward, and

offered his morning prayers to Him who sits above the sunlight. Margarita looked around her for the bandits, and trembled ; but they were not near. On they went again, wearied, but not disheartened. Herbert's spirit was buoyant as when first he rowed his little boat upon the sea at Glanheathyn. To have breathed, even for a day, the air of liberty—to have heard the birds sing—to have seen the sun rise in his unfading splendour—and to be free amongst the mountains, was happiness for him. Not so for Margarita. Until they were beyond the dominions of the robbers, she could not breathe with freedom.

An open path lay before them, and they followed it thankfully. It was precipitous, and in many places, dangerous, but Margarita leapt, like a mountain goat, from stone to stone, almost from precipice to precipice, and Herbert was undaunted by obstacles so trivial. About middle day, they heard a shepherd whistling amongst

the mountains, and saw a flock of sheep and goats grazing near. They went towards the man, and asked him how far they were from Naples ; that place being their first object, as it was there the strange gentleman they had spoken to in the cavern, promised to leave money for their use, in case of their escape. The shepherd said they were yet three days journey from Naples, but that they might reach a village on their way thither, by nightfall. The place he named was the village near which had been situated the farm in which Margarita was born. The man said that his brother was going shortly to the village, and that if they would go down to a cottage they would find below, he doubted not but that he would be their guide. They did so, and were kindly received by a female peasant, who pitied them for their sickly and weary look, and offered them refreshment. They accepted it gratefully, and having rested

an hour, waiting for the arrival of the brother, they set forth anew, and reached the village safely about eight o'clock.

Herbert hired a room for Margarita at the little inn, to which she immediately retired, dreading to be recognized by the host and hostess, who she knew but too well. She had resolved to go the following morning to her parents, to throw herself on their mercy, ask their forgiveness, and never again to leave them. This she had told Herbert, and had begged him to accompany her, which he had promised to do, and to entreat, with her, for pardon for one, who, truly, had been "more sinned against than sinning." But her restless heart would not let her wait till morning. When every one else was sleeping, she crept forth, and by the light of the moon, proceeded to her once happy home. The little garden was a wilderness, and from the general appearance of the house, she believed it to be untenanted.

A shudder came over her, and she turned away. Led by a sad instinct, she visited, on her way back, the village cemetery. She climbed the low wall, and went to the corner where the only brother she had ever had, who had gone to Heaven in his infancy, reposed. Near his little grave were two crosses, erected since Margarita was there last, on which some kindly hand had hung crowns of everlastings. She wanted no voice but that of her own heart, to tell her that her parents slept beneath. She fell down upon the cold turf, and buried her face in the grass that grew upon the graves. She sobbed and wept in the anguish of her soul, until her lamentations pierced through the night, and might almost have roused the dead beneath her. At last she grew calmer, and prayed: deeply, earnestly she prayed to her merciful Father in Heaven for pity and forgiveness. The pale moonlight streamed down upon her, as she knelt beneath the white

crosses, upon the graves of her parents: an earnest, we will hope, of the beams of divine love and compassion.

It was thus Herbert found her soon after daybreak. He had arisen early, in order to pursue their journey; had asked for Margarita, and found that she had left the inn. He guessed where she was gone. He made enquiries of the hostess respecting her parents. She told him that they had died of grief for the loss of their only child, about a twelvemonth before, and added, lifting her eyes to Heaven—

“Alas! that the rich traveller should come amongst the happy poor, and ruin the peace of honest families by taking from them what they prize most, their honour!”

Herbert enquired the way to the farm, and, passing the cemetery, it struck him that Margarita might be there: he entered, and found her.

He tried to raise her from the ground, but she clasped his knees with both her hands, and cried—

"They are here! I have killed them."

"They are there, I trust," said Herbert, pointing upwards. "You must come away, Margarita."

"Never, never, unless you will let me go with you to England. I will die here, on their graves, if you leave me behind."

"You shall come with me, Margarita," said Herbert, gently disengaging her hands, and raising her from the cold ground. "Do you think I will ever desert you, who have been my friend and preserver? But we must not stay."

"Only one more look at my home," entreated Margarita, "before I leave it for ever."

Herbert followed her to the deserted farm, which was not far off. It was a desolate place, not having been tenanted since the death of her parents. The garden was untrimmed, the vines unpruned, the bee-hives deserted—all was desolation and ruin. Margarita uprooted two small myrtle bushes, and whilst her tears fell

like rain upon them, returned with them to the cemetery, and planted them beneath the two crosses.

“Last, and only care of an ungrateful child,” she said. “Oh! kneel with me here,” she added, addressing Herbert, “that one pure prayer may arise from their dust, for their sinful daughter.”

Herbert knelt by her side, and offered up a short and simple prayer for her, in which she joined. This appeared to calm her, and she allowed Herbert to lead her away. They returned to the little inn, and he prevailed on her, with difficulty, to take some refreshment, before they proceeded. She was not recognized, and after breakfast, they again pursued their journey.

Margarita was called upon to exert all her energies. She knew the road for a few miles, after which it was equally strange to both of them, and they were not rich enough to hire a guide. They soon found themselves in wild, solitary places, fit

haunts for the banditti, from whom they could not yet feel themselves secure. Here and there they came to a lonely cottage, and gained information and refreshment from its simple inmates, but when night drew on, they looked about them in vain for a habitation. It was not without reason that they feared the bandits. As the shadows deepened, and they pressed onwards, they heard hasty steps behind them. They thought they heard voices also. They did not pause to consider whether they were friends or foes, but ran on as fast as their trembling limbs would let them. The footsteps gained upon them. Both of them drew their pistol and dagger from their belts, and were prepared for danger. Nearer, nearer they come. Some one is at their back.

“Halt!” cries a voice; a man appears—it is Giulio, the bandit.

Herbert pointed his pistol, and so did Margarita.

“Fear me not;” said Giulio, hurriedly;

I would save you. The gang are near, and will be upon you soon. I am your friend, I swear it by my sword. Commit yourselves to me, and you are safe; go on alone, and you are re-captured."

Margarita looked at him earnestly, and he stood her gaze. "Can I believe this?" she said.

"Yes, by my soul;" was the reply, "but hasten."

"We must trust him; we *can* trust him," she said, and Herbert also believed that he was sincere, for he had always been kinder than the rest.

They submitted themselves to his guidance, and he led them, by a cross-path, to a cavern, which, he said, was known only to him. From hence they were soon able to see dim figures passing in the twilight, and even to hear voices. It was too surely the banditti.

"They are in search of you;" whispered Giulio, and will raise the devil till they find you. I am tired of the trade, and

would find an honest— but I cannot desert with you. Tell me, Signor, if you wish to save a poor wretch from further crimes, whether you will let me find you out in England, and lend me a helping hand. One good turn deserves another.”

“Willingly,” said Herbert, “if you are sincere.

“Then just put down your name upon this bit of paper, and perhaps some day I may turn out an honest fellow.”

Herbert wrote his address, half in doubt, half in gratitude.

“You are safe now,” said Giulio, “and I must not stay, or they will suspect me. Follow that path, and in a quarter of an hour you will be at a village, where you may venture to remain the night : but get guides and an escort on to Naples, or else do not stir for another clear day. *Addio*, Margarita. *Addio*, Signore,” and with a nod and a bound, Giulio left the hiding-place.

“I always knew he was kind-hearted,”

said Margarita, as she and Herbert followed the path he pointed out.

They reached the village, as Giulio had said, in about a quarter of an hour, and were fortunate in meeting the priest, almost as they entered it. Herbert addressed him, and confided to him their situation and adventures. He listened attentively, and said it was well they had spoken to him, as every other inhabitant of the village would have feared to shelter them. He took them immediately to his house, and treated them most kindly, offering them beds, refreshment, and a refuge for the morrow, all of which they accepted with gratitude.

Herbert observed that Margarita looked at the good priest with a gaze of singular agitation, and when he left them to go and order preparation to be made for their entertainment, she suddenly exclaimed—

“That was the man who married me; I could swear it.”

“What can you mean,” asked Herbert.

“That the priest who united me to Mordaunt, is here or I am mad.”

Their host returned and Herbert asked him, whether he had any recollection of marrying two persons, by name George Mordaunt, and Margarita Pacini. The priest coloured, hesitated, and said he had.

“Then I was really married,” cried Margarita, throwing herself on her knees before the priest. “Say so ; confirm it, I beg—I entreat you.”

“If you are Margarita Pacini,” replied the priest, “you certainly were, really and lawfully united ; though I lament having been inveigled into so ill-concerted a thing, as your marriage turned out to be. A servant came to me, and told me, that if I wished to save a virtuous girl from dishonour, I should accompany him, and unite her to one who would otherwise seduce her. I did accompany him ; and, finding you and your intended husband both, apparently, anxious to be married,

joined your hands according to the forms of our church. When all was over, and you were gone, the servant laughed, and said that he had been revenged upon his master for some ill-turn he had done him, and had taken him a real instead of a sham priest, as he had promised to do. I inquired what he meant, and he told me that his master had ordered him to do, what he had been heartily ashamed of doing once before—to bribe some man, who could read, to go through the marriage ceremony in priestly attire; and he had come straight to me. I found that I had been imposed on; but had no means of following you to make the facts known to you. I can now, however, I am thankful to say, give you a certificate of your marriage, which was quite lawful.”

“Thank you! thank God!” said Margarita, passionately. “I am a wife! oh! had my parents but lived! You are my preserver—the saviour of my honour,

Oh! if you could but go to my native village, or write to the inn-keeper's wife, to make known this fact, and how I was led away from my duty and my parents, I should leave my native land almost happy."

"I will do so gladly," said the good priest, "and re-establish your fame as well as I can. But, my child, you have greatly erred. May God keep you from such sin for the future."

"Alas! I have now no parents to leave, and no heart for love," said Margarita. "I desire only to end my days in peace and retirement."

"In a nunnery, then," said the priest, "where you may give yourself up to religion."

Margarita shook her head.

"I go with him," she said, pointing to Herbert, "to his quiet home, where he and his will teach me to be good."

The priest said no more, but gave her the certificate of her marriage, which

she took with gratitude, and pressed to her lips.

A day of quiet and repose renovated the travellers, and gave them renewed strength and spirits for their journey. The good priest, who expressed a lively interest in them, proposed accompanying them to Naples, and hired mules to aid their progress. They reached Naples the following night without further adventures. The priest told Herbert that Lord Hastings had scoured the mountains for months, unsuccessfully, in search of him and the banditti. The next morning, Herbert presented himself and the ring given him by his fellow captive, at the bank of the Signori Sgombri, and found that two hundred pounds had been left by a gentleman, named Colonel Llewellyn, in their hands for his use, together with an order to advance more if necessary. Herbert was as much struck by the name as the stranger had seemed to be, when he had mentioned his in the cave; but merely

supposed him to be a fellow countryman, and one of the very numerous and highly respectable descendents of the illustrious Prince Llewellen, from whom all the branches of that widely spread family are supposed to spring. He thankfully took the money, and prayed for his benefactor.

He now felt, once more, really at liberty, and no doubt or fear arose to distress him. His dreams that night were peaceful and happy. They were of home and beloved friends. Gwenthlean, lovely as ever, welcomed him back, and he gave Margarita to her care. There had been no changes since he left. All the sorrows of his captivity melted into joy; or were remembered only as the torture of a mind diseased. Thus let us leave him for the present, and return to those friends who have made his dreams so happy.

CHAPTER VI.

Look, look, the summer rises in her cheeks :
A blush as hot as June, comes flooding o'er
Her too proud paleness. Burning modesty
Warms all her brow, and beauty, quite abashed,
Droops her twin stars to earthward.

• PROCTOR.

WE must pass over about eight months at Glanheathyn, as slightly as we can, and walk from winter to summer, somewhat hastily. The grief naturally attendant upon Lizzie's death, was gradually wearing into a sweet and tender recollection of her earthly attractions, and a joyful satisfaction that she was now an angel in heaven. Gwenthlean, to the common eye,

appeared placid, and if never gay, composed. But Clare read beyond the surface. She saw in the pale cheek, and frequently suppressed sigh, that

“ With a green and yellow melancholy,
She sat, like patience on a monument,
Smiling at grief.”

She saw that Mr. Grant, though an accepted suitor, was not beloved. But in vain she sought, by every tender artifice that affection could suggest, to obtain Gwenthlean's confidence. Her mother, too, was unhappy about her, and frequently asked whether her heart would accompany her hand if she married ; to which the reply she gave was always the same, “ That Mr. Grant had accepted of such love as she had to give ; and she would endeavour to do her duty by him.”

The reprieve afforded by the death of her sister, was expiring, and Mr. Grant

urged the consummation of their engagement so earnestly and apparently with such good reason, that Gwenthlean was called upon to fix the period of their marriage, which she did, calmly, but with a heavy heart. There was no further intelligence of Herbert, and every one believed him dead. Mr. Grant never mentioned his name, and cast glances so full of inquiry upon Gwenthlean when it was spoken by others, that she could not but perceive that her secret was known to him. His conduct had been so irreproachable, to all appearance, since the fatal evening that had bound them to one another, that she could find no fault in him ; but the remembrance of the extracted promise, weighed upon her mind.

He had once alluded to it, saying that overpowering affection alone, had instigated him ; but he did not offer to release her from it, if she repented having been urged into making it, by unfortunate circum-

stances. He did not say that Mr. Lloyd should be free, whether it were kept or not. Her life was a perpetual struggle; and she did not dare, even if she wished it, to confide either in her mother or sister, for she was bound down to secrecy.

Colonel Llewellyn was a constant visitor both at the parsonage and cottage. He was a singular man, and no one could thoroughly make him out; but he was evidently very much interested in his new acquaintances. He would go away for a week or so, and return again, taking up his quarters principally with Mr. Lloyd, who delighted in having him with him, that he might hear him repeat, over and over again, the history of his casual meeting with Herbert. Clare could never learn whether he had discovered, through her aunt, who they were, for he avoided mentioning that lady, and she, of course, never broached the subject. Mr. Grant's sur-

prise had been great, when he found that Miss Llewellen, the heiress, was Gwenthlean's sister ; but never having heard her parentage mentioned, he was satisfied with the general information given him, of her having discovered their relationship at the Wynnes', and acquiesced in Lady Llewellen's request that he should not make it known. He had pleasant surmises, however, that the humble Gwenthlean was of higher origin than was supposed, but he left it to time to develop what that origin was.

His only enemy at Craigyvellyn, he believed to be Clare, and he feared her, because he was conscious that she knew him, and dreaded her influence on her sister. But Clare perceived that Gwenthlean had gone too far to retract with honour, therefore, could only look on in silence. Lady Llewellen received occasional remittances from the firm in which her little property was invested, with the information that

they hoped to repay what was due, when certain difficulties were mastered which had threatened a failure. So far matters were brightening.

Mr. Grant was making splendid preparations for his marriage, which now began to be generally talked of. The poor people rejoiced in what they considered Gwenthlean's good fortune. Mr. Lloyd sighed and said nothing. The worthy miller set his face against it. It did not promise to be a cheerful wedding, for every one concerned, except Mr. Grant, felt a kind of indescribable oppression; and when the ladies began to think it necessary to consult about the trousseau, Miriam was the only one who entered into the subject with all her heart, and as it deserved. As to Gwenthlean, she tried in vain to take an interest. Unlike Trotty Veck's daughter Meg, she did not sit and sing over her wedding dress until midnight; but like Flora Mac Ivor, when she

worked at her brother's shroud, she tried to be calm, when anguish was on her spirit.

Clare inwardly called the approaching nuptials, "a sacrifice," and dreaded the day as one that was to seal her sister's title to the tomb.

But for this, Clare would have been the happiest of human beings. She had not known enough of her youngest sister, to make her feel her loss very acutely, deep as was the lesson she had learnt from her death ; and she found in her mother and Gwenthlean, all that her heart had panted for from childhood ; warm love, example and instruction.

If Clare ever sighed, it was when she thought of Lord Hastings ; and then she laughed at what she called her *sentiment*. She thought that she had now so many to love, who really loved her, that it was folly to regret him, with all his aristocratic pride and coldness, especially as she felt

fully convinced that he did not regret her.

About a week before Gwenthlean's marriage, or, as Clare would have called it, *sacrifice*; Clare walked to the village, the bearer of a dozen messages from her mother. The first person she met was that determined Squire of Dames—that Don Quixote—that Malvolio—the jolly miller, and he sported his best English with a decided Welsh accent, in compliments and politenesses as he walked by her side.

“Make so bold, miss; when you are going—ahem!—to follow the other miss's good example?” he began.

“As soon as I can get any one to take compassion on me, Mr. Jenkins,” said Clare, archly. “But I am a very useless piece of furniture. I never made a pudding, pickle, or anything that a good house-keeper ought to do, in my life.”

“Soon learnt, miss,” replied the miller. “I dare say, now, there are plenty of fine

young gentlemen down below, there, in England, or over in foreign parts, that you could fancy—If I was but a furriner, miss—”

Whether the miller would have arrived at another proposal, or whether Clare would have accepted him, can never, now, be known, as his loquacity was cut short by their arrival in the little village of Craigyvellyn.

Clare went about from one house to another delivering her various messages ; seeing one or two sick people, and making herself very much at home with every body, until she arrived at the door of the inn. The miller, who had been following her about at a respectful distance, here came up to her, and contrasted well with a portly little landlady, who stood at the door dressed in Welsh costume. Clare stopped to speak to Mrs. Jones, “ Golden Lion,” who, like most hostesses, had plenty to say, and who indulged herself by entertaining Clare with the history of her

astonishment, when she found that the young lady who brought Miss Llewellen home in the chariot, and "put up at the Golden Lion," turned out to be Mrs. Llewellen's own daughter. Meanwhile, Clare was much interested in a little curly-headed, rosy cheeked urchin, who had separated himself from a group of children that were at play near the inn, and was timidly touching, with the tip of one finger, the fringe of her parasol. She sat down upon the stone seat just underneath the flaming yellow lion—the only thing 'golden' about the place—and listened to the child's expressions of wonder, which, being in Welsh, she vainly tried to understand, but which were duly translated by Mrs. Jones. At last she opened the parasol, and gave it to the half-naked, dimpled child, who strutted about with it proudly, to the admiration of the other children, who looked on jealously. One little, delicate girl, gaining courage by seeing the success of her bolder companion, crept up to Clare's

side, and looked up into her face ; after which, she offered her a somewhat suspicious-looking cake that she held in her hand. Clare smothered her tolerably-well-brushed hair, but declined the cake, at which the miller's fat sides shook with an internal chuckle.

The scene is a pretty one. The little picturesque, scattered village, built on the sea-shore, with here and there a straggling tree in the back ground ; rocks on the right, and mountainous hills, sprinkled with sheep behind. Clare and her group of children, the miller, the landlady, and a few straggling women, who have joined them, in the foreground ; and fishermen mending their nets by the side of their boats, on the sea-shore to the left. Suddenly there appears a large party of cockle-women, winding irregularly beneath the rocks, and approaching the village across the sands. At this distance they look strangely picturesque, with their bare feet, short petticoats, and jackets, and broad-brimmed,

flat hats. Upon their heads they bear, not ungracefully, their large baskets, filled with the fruits of their hard labours; and beside most of them walk the patient donkeys, also laden with paniers and baskets of cockles, or, perchance, with some weary child, whose mother thinks more of his legs than those of the poor beast. Other children trot merrily along by the side of their parents, holding fast by the end of the jackets; whilst here and there a dog, who has been the companion of their toils, leads the way homewards. Few know how hard those poor women have been labouring for hours. Up to their knees in sand, they have been scraping up, with their hooked knives, the hard shell-fish that adhere so pertinaciously to their beds, that you would think they knew the fate that awaited them. And small are their gains, half a sack full of cockles yielding them, perchance, sixpence.

Onwards they come, two or three dozen of them, some in pairs, some straggling

alone, others by their donkeys, others with their children, looking more like foreigners than other race of people I ever saw. The broad afternoon sun shines full upon them—the blue distant mountains are at their backs; the rocks on one side, and the sea, flowing up to their feet, on the other: whilst the little mud-walled village in which they dwell, and where their moderate hopes are centered, lies before them. Nearer they come, and we can hear their merry voices, as they talk and laugh together, and we wonder how they manage to be so happy, clothed so scantily, fed so poorly, and housed so humbly as they are. Blessed is the truth, that happiness dwells just as contentedly with the peasant as the monarch. I will not say more contentedly because she is as willing to take up her abode with the one as with the other. By degrees the bare feet approach the village—the women curtsey and smile at Clara as they pass, who returns their recognition pleasantly—the children glance with amaze-

ment at their young friend underneath the parasol; the donkeys quicken their slow steps at the prospect of their meagre provender; the dogs set up a joyous bark, and the whole party soon disperse to their various abodes.

Clare was delighted with them all—longed for a sketch-book and pencil to “put them down,” as an old woman once expressed it, and looked so bright and beautiful as she nodded and smiled, and tried to talk Welsh, that it was no wonder her humble friends looked at her with admiration, or that the miller again felt his heart beat strangely. Neither can we feel surprised if some one else gazed ardently at her, and wondered whether she and all the very substantial forms around her, were visions or realities. And gaze he most assuredly did.

But he did not think of attendant circumstances in the astonishment and pleasure of meeting: nor, at first, did she; for when she had recovered her composure,

she inquired for his mother and sisters ; asked when he arrived in the neighbourhood—whether he were staying at the Wynnes', and a variety of indifferent questions which served better to cover her confusion than to express her real feelings.

“ This must be the surprise, then,” he said, as he walked by her side towards the place where he had left his horse, “ that Grant spoke of, when he invited me to his wedding : and a most agreeable one it certainly is. Are *you* visiting in the neighbourhood, may I ask ?”

“ I am residing here,” she said, with a blush, which Lord Hastings perceived, and made no further inquiries ; but a change passed over his features, expressive of doubt or disappointment.

Clare wished to tell him all, but she could not—she wished to discover whether he had heard from her aunt, or seen her, and whether she had mentioned her name ; but he evidently avoided the subject, thus plainly proving, she justly considered, that

he was not altogether ignorant of her having quitted her aunt, though he probably was not acquainted with her reasons for so doing. The truth was, that Lord Hastings had heard various reports concerning her conduct, none of them to her advantage. The high opinion he entertained of her, and the low estimation in which he held the fashionable gossips who spoke of her, and who were glad to vent their long pent-up jealousy by back-biting her, made him slow to believe what was largely retailed to him. Every one suspected that he had admired her, and many had the bad taste to make the worst of her conduct in his presence ; thus strengthening in his comprehensive mind, the low opinion he entertained of them, and casting upon them the imputation of female jealousy—that least of all little passions, which thinks to gratify itself, and elevate its possessor, by depreciating the object that excites it, but which ever, sooner or later, fails of its purpose.

The Countess Sforza had written to

Lady Hastings, declining her invitation to the manor, upon plea of ill-health, and merely saying that Miss Llewellen, having relinquished her protection, would of course, relinquish also the friendship of *her* friends. Of this the Hastings family had to make the best they could ; and various were their conjectures on the subject ; for they were all, more or less, attached to Clare. Lord Hastings could not endure the suspense, and made an excuse for visiting Bath, where he called upon the Countess, bearing a message from his sister Louisa, who wished to obtain Clare's address that she might write to her, and hear from herself the reason of her leaving her aunt. The Countess professed herself profoundly ignorant of Clare's movements or place of abode. She said that she had left her in a most ungrateful manner, but that it was too painful a subject to be discussed, and she must beg Lord Hastings to spare her feelings. All his attempts to obtain further information were fruitless. Reports

varied, as they usually do. Some persons asserted that Clare had eloped with a handsome Irishman, possessing little recommendation but his face, and a fine pair of moustaches, which he had cultivated, not because he was a "bold dragoon," but because he hoped they would captivate a fortune; and who had left Bath, probably on account of his tailor's bill, on the same day as Clare. Others said she had returned to Italy, and accompanied the declaration with so many side-winks, nods, inuendos, and tosses of the head, that had Clare seen them, she would have blushed, and learnt that prudence is necessary in this world, even in leaving an aunt to join a mother. There were some nearer the truth, who guessed that she had found a relation that she preferred to her aunt; but even these good-natured souls did not fail to add animadversions on her ingratitude, which was blacker than Erebus, or night, or the raven's wing, or any of those poetical similes, which the poets, or would-

be poets, borrow from one another to express the intensity of darkness.

All these reports tended to increase Lord Hastings's desire to discover the real truth, and had he lived in the days of knight errantry, he might have set forth on a white palfrey, sword in hand, in search of his lady-love—as it was, he was compelled to “chew the cud of sweet and bitter fancy,” and ruminare on her beauty and pride—her perfections and imperfections; half wishing that he had not so resolutely determined never to marry an heiress. There was now an additional interest thrown over her—that of mystery; and if he had admired her when he saw her daily courted by the flatterers of the world, he loved her when he heard her name branded by what he knew must be false slander, and thought of her as one probably lost to him for ever. Thus, even Lord Hastings, like his *worthy* friend, Mr. Grant, had been careless of what might once have been within

his grasp, whilst he sighed for the treasure as soon as he fancied it had eluded it.

When he had given his horse into the charge of the portly hostess, he asked if he might be allowed to see Clare to the end of her walk, as he had much to say to her. She assented, but with a slight hesitation. The conversation turned first upon Gwenthlean's marriage, and then upon the discovery of Herbert in the cave of which Lord Hastings had heard from Colonel Llewellen. Clare's intimate knowledge of every circumstance connected with both, astonished him, and he was beginning to entertain some suspicions, when they reached the cottage, which, it will be remembered, he did not visit during his previous few hours stay at Glanheathyn.

Lady Llewellen, Gwenthlean, and Mr. Grant were in the garden. Lord Hastings looked enquiringly at Clare, but Mr. Grant perceiving him came quickly forward, and welcomed him warmly. He already knew

both the ladies, and was soon invited into the house. Here the mystery was not long in finding a solution. Clare was evidently at home. She addressed Lady Llewellen as her mother—Gwenthlean as her sister—and looked so unspeakably beautiful and happy as she did so, that Lord Hastings was more charmed with her than he had ever been before. She was, in her new character, so much more humble and winning in her manners—and there is a beauty in humility which even the grace of such a pride as Clare's had been, cannot equal—she was so natural, so affectionate in her attentions to her mother; so tender and anxious towards Gwenthlean—and, at the same time, so modest, nay, almost shy towards himself, that Lord Hastings thought it would be a happier fate to win and wear the pearl hidden amongst the waves of that lonely place, than the richest diamonds of a queenly coronet.

He had never spent so happy an even-

ing as he spent that evening at the cottage. Not in all the crowded drawing-rooms of courtly company, in which he had been accustomed to move—not amongst the belles of the fashionable world, even though Clare had been the brightest of them. There was the solitude and quiet of the scene itself; the matron grace of Lady Llewellen—the pale sweetness of Gwenthlean—the serene old age of Mr. Lloyd—the happiness of his friend Mr. Grant—the fidgetty good humour of Colonel Llewellen,—and lastly the sparkling beauty of Clare. His own pride and reserve, too, wore off beneath the genial influence of natural refinement, unpolluted by art, and Clare looked upon him with feelings of equal astonishment with his own. For the first time they knew and understood each other. Had it not been that every one present was haunted more or less, by a thought of Herbert, and his uncertain fate, they might have been all a happy party; but there was that in Gwenthlean's eye,

which showed, to a nice and interested observer, that her heart was ill at ease and even Lord Hastings could not discover in her manner or appearance the half gay, half bashful joy of the future bride.

CHAPTER VII.

No season this for counsel or delay,
Too soon the eventful moments haste away ;
Here perseverance, with each help of art,
Must join the boldest efforts of the heart.
These only now their misery can relieve,
These only now a dawn of safety give ;
While o'er the quivering deck, from van to rear,
Broad surges roll in terrible career.

FALCONEE'S SHIPWRECK.

GWENTHLEAN had been spending a long day alone with Mr. Lloyd, the last she would probably ever spend with him as Gwenthlean Llewellen. She had promised her mother to return early, because Mr. Grant,

Lord Hastings, and Colonel Llewellen, who had gone on an expedition up the mountains, were to finish the evening at the cottage. The afternoon had been stormy, and an occasional flash of lightning, a peal of distant thunder, or a few large drops of rain, seemed to presage tempestuous weather. The sea-gulls had collected together as if for mutual protection, and flew about like moving clouds, uttering their melancholy scream in concert. The bosom of the sea heaved and fell, as if agitated by passion, and Walter the clerk, who was a sailor and fisherman, said he feared there would be rough work at sea, and bad weather at home.

Gwenthlean begged him to hasten to get the large ferry boat for her, as she wished to leave before the storm came on. Mr. Lloyd asked her to remain the night; but she thought it better to refuse, knowing that she should be expected at home. Gwenthlean had been accustomed to cross the little bay in all weathers, therefore

feared nothing ; and, besides, she said, the summer storms, if they had one, soon passed away. A heavy peal of thunder was heard as she spoke, and a flash of lightning darted across the window. Thick clouds were lowering in the heavens, and the atmosphere was dense and oppressively hot. The birds ceased to sing, and cowered amongst the bushes, whilst the sheep that were grazing upon the mountains, ran to covert.

“ The boat is ready, Miss,” said Walter ; “ and I have got Morgan to come along, and to help the ferrymen to row you across quickly. We shall be able to get over before the storm comes on, though I am afraid we shall have a rough row.”

Mr. Lloyd and Gwenthlean were looking out of the window, and the former said—

“ You had better make haste, my love, for the sooner you get over the better ;” then he added, in a whisper, “ I shall see you again before *the* day ; but you must excuse an old man like me from joining a

wedding party, as well as from officiating at the ceremony. It would be too much for me."

Mr. Lloyd's involuntary sigh was interrupted by Watty, who exclaimed—

"There is a vessel out yonder, just coming up. She looks sadly tossed about. I hope she wont strike upon the sands."

"God forbid," said Mr. Lloyd.

The sands alluded to, were dangerous quicksands, at a distance from the little bay, in the open sea; upon which many vessels had been wrecked, and to which, shameful to relate, some had been known to be guided by false lights placed by wreckers, who, here and there, infested the coast. Gwenthlean looked towards the sea, and saw a ship battling with the waves in the extreme distance; but some way from the frightful quicksands, though out of the right line of sail. She shuddered as she gazed, having already witnessed some fearful scenes near the spot. She wished Mr. Lloyd good bye, and ac-

accompanied Watty to the beach, where Morgan was waiting, with a good-sized, safe boat, and two sailors, to row her over.

It generally took from twenty minutes to half an hour to get across—in the present turbulent condition of the elements, they could scarcely expect to achieve the passage so speedily, since the heaving of the waves tossed the boat about, and made the oars difficult to manage. The sailors had thrown up a kind of tarpauling-awning for Gwenthlean, under which she sat, fearless of rain or wind, watching the movements of the ship, that tossed about in the distance. But there was more difficulty, and, perhaps, danger, in her own passage, than she imagined; and so the sailors found when they were about a quarter of the way across. The wind increased, and the sea became more and more tumultuous, whilst the sky was black as ink, and the storm that had been so long brewing, began to come on in good

earnest. Still the boat made her way manfully against the billows, and the rowers laboured with all their strength to get her on. They had been compelled to haul in her sail, owing to the violence of the wind, which blowing in rather a contrary direction, made their work doubly difficult.

But Gwenthlean scarcely thought whether she were herself in danger or not, she was so much occupied with the distant ship, which, the sailors said, was in great peril of striking on the sands. She appeared to have been injured by some previous gales, and to be returning in a bad condition, having lost her mainsail, and being, apparently, at the will of the elements. She was driven rapidly forward towards the quicksands, the exact position of which Gwenthlean knew well, and Watty, when he could spare a moment to reply to her hurried questions, said that he would not give much for the cargo.

The sky suddenly grew intensely dark ;

and there was a peal of thunder which seemed to shake the earth from its foundations. It rolled through the sky like the wheels of ten thousand chariots ; echoed from rock to rock with frightful vibration—and made the mountains call upon, and answer one another by means of its tremendous voice. Then the rain came down in torrents, mingling with the white surf that foamed up from the sea, and finally mixing with the boiling waves. Though the hour was still far from the first grey of twilight, “the dark was over all,” and, but for the occasional vivid flashes of lightning that darted through the murky atmosphere, the surrounding objects, and particularly the advancing vessel, would have been invisible. Sometimes the living elemental fire, played around the ship, and displayed her to Gwenthlean’s aching sight, labouring and tossing from side to side, close by the quicksands, which, she knew well, must be unknown to her crew. It was awful to

think that so many human beings might be within a hair's breadth of destruction, and be unconscious of the secret enemy that lay beneath the waters, ready to swallow them up, even within sight of land. It was awful to feel in comparative security upon the same ocean, and at so short a distance from creatures on the very brink of eternity.

Heavily, and with difficulty, yet successfully, the boat battled with the waves, and Gwenthlean was more than half way across the bay. She shuddered as she looked upon the black sky, the raging waste of waters, the forked lightning, and the embattled elements—and she raised a prayer to Heaven for the safety of the ship and her crew, whilst the spray of the waves dashed in upon her, and drenched her to the skin.

“What will become of them?” she ejaculated, as a sudden gleam of light revealed the vessel, which appeared to be

lounging on one side, and almost stationary.

"I fear it is all over with them, miss," replied Walter, "unless they get help—they must have struck, I fear;" and the old man rested a moment on his oar, to gaze upon the now undiscoverable distance; forgetting, in his compassion for the distressed ship, the doubtful fate of his own little bark—but the two younger sailors pushed on, careless of all but their own safety.

There were a few minutes of painful silence, and then came the signal of distress: the ship had too surely foundered. Oh! how that melancholy minute-gun thrilled to Gwenthlean's heart.

"Stop!" she cried, "stop one moment," and the sailors paused, whilst another loud peal of thunder shook the boat, followed by several flashes of lightning, which plainly disclosed to the practised eye of the seamen, that the vessel was upon the quick-

sands, and unless assistance could be promptly rendered, must sink, with her cargo and crew, to the bottom.

"Is there no help?" said Gwenthlean, in an agony—"can we not save them?"

"There is no boat will put out such a day as this, miss," said Walter. "It would be pretty certain never to reach the ship. The sea is mountains high out yonder, and I question whether it would be possible for any number of sailors to get a boat through it."

"But they will not leave her to perish! There is another signal! Let us help her! Walter, Morgan, for heaven's sake. Lose no time—push off towards her directly."

"Miss Llewellen," said Walter in astonishment, "what can you mean? Why I would not take a thousand pounds to venture. We should all go to the bottom together."

"Oh no! we shall save them. I know we shall save them! For God's sake let your human nature—your compassion to

your fellow creatures—your love to your Maker get the better of your fear. Help them—try at least to save them—let them not perish without an effort.”

Gwenthlean rose from beneath her rough shelter, and advancing into the boat, laid her hand on that of the hardy old seaman she was addressing, and with a look of entreaty continued to plead for the sufferers. But she had harder hearts to melt than that of her old friend Walter. The sailors who helped him were more impenetrable than iron, and cared not whether the ship sunk or not, though they would have done much to serve Gwenthlean.

“What?” she continued, earnestly, whilst the tears sprung to her eyes, “will you risk nothing to save a whole ship’s crew from inevitable destruction? Think of their friends—think of their immortal souls! Put yourselves in their places, and imagine their unspeakable agony at this dreadful moment! Hark! do you not hear the minute gun again? can you re-

sist such an appeal—you cannot—I am sure you cannot?”

The boatmen were all motionless, and old Morgan, looking kindly at his young mistress, said,

“I am ready Miss Gwenthlean to do your bidding—but I cannot risk your precious life—my own is of little worth, but yours—”

“Think not of me,” cried Gwenthlean, “think of your perishing fellow creatures. Will you not too consent, Walter? My kind, dear friend—say you will help them, and the Almighty will reward you here and hereafter.”

This was taking Walter by his weak point.

“I will do any thing in God’s service and yours, miss?” he said.

But there were the two stubborn young sailors, who muttered to themselves that they could not endanger their lives for the sake of people they knew nothing of. Gwenthlean offered them gold; told them

she would insure them a reward whether they succeeded or not. They began to soften.

"But you, miss," said one "if we row you ashore first, the ship will be gone."

"I will go with you—any thing rather make no effort. You will never repent of so good an action—there! there! she is going farther into the dangerous part—look at her through the lightning! Oh God have mercy on them!" and Gwentlean fell upon her knees before the sailors, and in words of piercing entreaty supplicated them to yield.

The men relented half sulkily, to Gwentlean's unutterable happiness. She rose and watched the vessel, as from time to time, she was visible through the pelting storm. The rain and spray drenched the heroic girl; but she who had forgotten self at other hours of trying suffering, thought not of her own person, when so many lives were at stake.

"If we get round by the right, in time,"

said Walter, "we shall avoid the worst part of the quicksands—the water is deep there, and we can push off easily—but if she gets further in, it is all over."

The boat was soon out of the sheltered cove, and then came the danger to the little crew. Now a huge wave lifted her up, as if she were a toy to sport with—now, again, tossed her down on the other side. Still the four men rowed bravely on, and battling with the waves Gwenthlean stood at the helm, for there was little use to attempt to steer, praying inwardly for guidance and assistance from above. On—on—on—went the boat. Through the huge breakers like a bird; for the waves lashed her in vain. Providence watched over her. There was a loud shout of encouragement from the shore.—They were observed, and other prayers mingled with Gwenthlean's. Through the storm the sound of voices came, and as the boat drew nearer and nearer to the ship, Gwenthlean saw figures

on the deck; outstretched arms—signals of distress—and sometimes she thought a cry pierced the noise of the elements.

The thunder growled around,—the lightning flashed,—the rain poured down,—still the gallant boat overleapt the waves. On—on—on—despite the tossings, and lurchings, and ups and downs, and all the wild revelry of the billows. But the ship! She appeared sinking just as they were within reach of her. The boisterous waves dashed over her sides, and she seemed lost for ever. Gwenthlean shrieked in terror; but she re-appeared, rolling from side to side, unmanaged and unmanageable. The sailors said she was not yet upon the quicksands; but already half a wreck, and at the mercy of the winds. Gwenthlean thanked God, and hoped. She saw one of the huge posts that had been planted to mark the fatal spot, and perceived that another violent gale would send the vessel upon it.

“We cannot take in more than a dozen

or so," said one of the young men, "or our boat will sink."

A shout from the ship acknowledged their nearer approach, and, in a few minutes, the boat was alongside of her. There was a momentary silence, then all was bustle and confusion. The crew crowded together to the right side of the deck, and exclamations of thanksgiving were audible from every mouth. But the darkness had increased as the evening advanced, and the difficulties were still numerous. The ladders were prepared, and let down—but the motion of the ship and boat rendered it almost impossible to descend them. The question was put of "how many hands on board." "Fourteen," was the answer, "the rest have escaped in the long boat."

"We can save them all, then," said Gwenthlean.

Lights glimmered on deck—and the fitful lightning streamed—the wind and rain were, however, less violent.

"Let down the lady first," said a voice—"take care of the lady,"—and Gwenthlean perceived a female form clinging to a man, who was trying to pacify her. She seemed desirous to remain on board until he descended; but the sailors assisted her, somewhat roughly, towards the ladder. One of them lifted her over the side of the vessel, and she was received, almost lifeless, in the arms of Walter, who was clinging to the ladder, and who placed her gently beneath the awning that had been spread for Gwenthlean. There was one other female belonging to the vessel, who descended with less difficulty; then several passengers, and, finally, the friend of the lady, and the captain; in all, as had been said, fourteen souls.

Gwenthlean crept in under the awning, and whispered to the half insensible female, that a friend was near. But the storm was too violent, and the danger of returning too great, to think much of

minor circumstances. When they were all seated, and the boat well manned with rowers, there was, as by universal consent, a pause. The voices that had been so busy in directing, were silenced, for each individual was engaged in inward thanksgiving that the first great peril was past. The obscurity was too dense to allow of the rescued distinguishing their rescuers; but a volume of thanks was soon poured forth, scarcely audible in the storm.

Again the undaunted boat ploughed the deep furrows of the waves—again she made her way through the tempest. It was an hour of fear and trembling, and Gwenthlean committed herself to her God for life or death. Few words were spoken, and those few by the sailors. A stranger was at the helm, and he steered, as by instinct, aright. Their progress was very slow: slower than before, for the wind was contrary—but the storm gradually abated. The turbulent elements

were calming, and the hollow thunder rolled heavily away in the distance. The sailors were nearly exhausted when they once more entered the little bay, and were greeted by a long, loud, convulsive shout from the sands, which rang among the rocks, and cheered them on to further exertion. Lights flitted and glimmered here and there on shore—and Gwenthlean saw the cottage illuminated in every window, and felt how many beating hearts and tearful eyes were assembled therein.

The black sky began to roll off into large wild clouds, between two of which a glimmering of moonlight appeared. A faint white streak skirted the clouds, for a moment, and then they united again, and veiled the shining orb. But she made her way beneath them, and breaking through the darkness, shone forth, like hope amidst the clouds of sorrow, right over the cottage. The person at the helm made a sudden movement, and ejaculated,

"Thank God," when the clouds again rolled over the Queen of Night, and all was comparative obscurity.

The dangers and difficulties were, however, over. The sea was becoming calm, and the boat rowed on prosperously. The stranger steered towards their cottage, and the sailors exerted their remaining energies. A few more strokes of the oar—a few more efforts—and she neared the shore. The anchor was cast, and there were only a few rippling waves to wade through. Again the moon broke out. One of the sailors lifted the strange lady in his arms, and ran with her through the surf and wet sand towards the cottage. Gwenthlean crept forth ; but cold and stiff with exposure to the wet, she could not stand, and sunk down partially insensible.

"Can it be?" cried the helmsman, rushing forward ; and, after gazing on the pale face and dishevelled hair, as the moonlight streamed upon them, he seized

Gwenthlean in his arms, leapt from the boat, and, with unsteady steps, tottered across the waters, scarcely strong enough to support the burden he bore.

There were innumerable figures on the beach waiting to receive the rescued. Lady Llewellen and Clare, Mr. Grant, Colonel Llewellen, Lord Hastings, the miller, Miriam, and sailors and peasants, of all ages. Many ran towards them—Mr. Grant outstripped the rest, and reaching Gwenthlean and her supporter, exclaimed, in a voice scarcely audible from agitation,

“Give her to me. Does she live? Gwenthlean speak—Give her to me.”

“Never!” cried the stranger, and rushed past him with invigorated steps.

Another cloud passed over the moon.

Gwenthlean awoke from her temporary insensibility.

“Are they saved?” she murmured.

“All,” replied the stranger.

“Thank God,” she ejaculated; “but

I can walk. Where am I? — with whom?"

"With a friend," replied the stranger. "Fear nothing," and he pressed her yet more closely in his arms.

Gwenthlean gave a faint cry, and her head sunk back upon the stranger's shoulder. She had recognised that low, deep, agitated voice, and fainted. It was Herbert who sustained her—It was Herbert who pressed his lips to her pale face, and rushing forward, placed her in her mother's arms—It was Herbert, who again assisted that mother to convey her to the cottage, and having laid her, senseless, on the sofa, turned aside to control his feelings. It was no moment, then, to discover himself. There were others who needed his assistance; but he had scarcely strength to render it.

He mingled with the crowd who were beginning to throng the passage and rooms, and stood as a stranger in the old familiar places. He watched them carry Gwenth-

lean and the other female to bed. He saw Lady Llewellen and Clare, whom he recognised as the Signorina Sforza of Italy, follow them to their apartment. To his astonishment, he beheld his friend, Lord Hastings ; his enemy, Mr. Grant ; his acquaintance of the robber's cave, Colonel Llewellen—all apparently domesticated at the cottage. There were Miriam, Walter, Morgan, the miller, and fifty other well-known faces ; but no one recognised him. Was he then so altered, or were they so engrossed with others as to pass him by unnoticed ? It was a strange, wild welcome home, and all seemed changed. Where was his grandfather ? Did he still live—and was he hale and venerable as of old ? Were the troubled thoughts that pressed upon him, forerunners of reality—and, was Mr. Grant the lover, or, perhaps, the husband of Gwenthlean ?

He rushed out into the air, and joined his fellow passengers—some of whom were preparing to follow the kind-hearted

miller to his hospitable abode. There, too, was David, the harper, pressing others to his little dwelling ; whilst the Captain and the few more respectable passengers, were taken at once to Mr. Grant's, who, as soon as he heard that Gwenthlean had revived, went after them, accompanied by Lord Hastings and Colonel Llewellen. Herbert contrived to evade the different parties ; but listened eagerly to the conversation that was going on, by which he learned that he and the ship's crew owed their preservation to Gwenthlean. From his heart he blessed her ; but prayed that he might not yet wish that he had perished in the waters. When they were all dispersed to their different resting-places, and the cottage had resumed its customary quiet, he knocked gently at the door. Nobody answered, and fearing to disturb the jaded inmates of the bed-rooms, who he hoped were sleeping, he lifted the latch, and entered the passage. He peeped into the little drawing-room—it was empty ; but

every thing looked as of old. The dining-room was also empty. He proceeded to the kitchen, where he heard well-known voices in high conversation. He tapped at the door, and Miriam uttered an authoritative "Come in." He paused, to consider whether it would be right to alarm the honest trio within, when "Who's there?" sounded from the gruff voice of Walter the clerk. Herbert opened the door, and went into the kitchen, closing the door immediately, lest the household should be disturbed. A loud scream from Miriam was the first indication given of his being recognised. He put his finger on his lips, in token of silence, and walked towards the table at which Miriam, Walter, and Morgan, were sitting, regaling themselves with Welsh ale and bread and cheese. He was about to say, "Don't you know me," when the trio simultaneously arose. Miriam rushed towards the door—but he seized her by the arm, and prevented her escape. Morgan, with a huge wedge of cheese

between his teeth, his eyes starting out of his head, and his knife in one hand, fell down upon his knees; whilst Walter, the clerk, scarcely less terrified, retreated almost into the fire, exclaiming, "Avaunt! The Lord have mercy upon us. A ghost!" and seizing the poker in one hand, and the toasting fork—which happened to be near—in the other, whilst his few grey hairs stood on end with fright. Herbert laughed heartily: he could not help it. That well-known laugh re-assured Miriam, who, like Morgan, had fallen upon her knees as soon as she felt the touch of Herbert's clammy hands. She ventured to look up.

"Ghosts are not flesh and blood, Miriam," said Herbert, "it is I myself—what are you afraid of? Walter—Morgan—my old—friends;—is this how you welcome me back?"

Poor Miriam cast her arms about his knees, and began to sob; she could not speak. He raised her from the ground, shook her by the hand, and then went to

help up Morgan, whose little round body seemed paralyzed, and who shook like a leaf. At last the cheese fell from his mouth, and the knife from his hand—and he exclaimed—

“Thank God!—thank God! My master—my poor master.” Now came forward Walter, and fairly took Herbert in his long, bony arms, and wept over him like a child.

“Christian is returned: the pilgrim is come home. The Lord be praised,” he said.

When at last they became more composed, and Herbert sat down amongst them, they began to consider the best means of breaking his return to Lady Llewellen. It was agreed that Miriam should call down Miss Clare, who was described to Herbert as Lady Llewellen's second daughter. He went into the drawing-room, and Clare soon appeared, pale and trembling with agitation, prepared by Miriam for the wonderful return of Her-

bert. Scarcely had their hands met in a warm, long grasp, when Lady Llewellen entered, with a candle in her hand, in search of something. She started at seeing a stranger with Clare, glanced at him—dropped the candlestick, screamed “Herbert,” and fell into his extended arms. He kissed her tenderly, and entreated her not to be alarmed, since he was safe once more, and owed his life to Gwenthlean. She recovered herself, and fell upon his neck in a transport of thankfulness, whilst Clare wept for joy. Herbert was quite overcome. Exhausted by agitation and the dangers he had escaped, he could bear up no longer, but sunk upon a sofa, and burst into tears : tears of weakness as well as pleasure. A glass of wine brought by Miriam soon restored him, and his first words were—

“Gwenthlean ! Is she—is she another’s?”

“No,” said Lady Llewellen—“but I will answer no questions to-night.”

She did not add that she dreaded the next question he might ask.

“One more:” he said, “My grandfather? is he very much changed—very much broken by his sorrows?”

“He has been wonderfully supported. And now, my dear, dear Herbert, you must go at once to rest. You are so ill—so worn.”

“I shall soon be well again, now I am come home. Let us thank God for all His mercies,” and he motioned them to kneel whilst he, himself, fell upon his knees. The servants were in the passage, and came in, and Herbert, in a low, impressive voice, poured forth a short, but inspired thanksgiving.

They arose calmed and strengthened—

Lady Llewellen's room had been prepared in case of emergency, and thither Morgan accompanied his young master as valet, followed by Walter with a tray of provisions, and finally by Miriam with hot water and flannels. Under such auspices, we will wish him good night, and leave him to quiet, happy slumbers, and dreams of Gwenthlean.

CHAPTER VIII.

I saw my Jannie's ghaist—I could na' think it he,
Till he said, "I'm come hame my love, to marry
thee."

Sair, sair, did we greet, and mickle say of a' ;
Ae kiss we took, nae mair. I bade him gang awa,
I wish that I were dead. but I'm no like to dee,
For oh ? I am but young yet, to cry—Woe is me.

Auld Robin Gray.

ON the morning succeeding the day on which the events recorded in the last chapter occurred, Gwenthlean arose very early. She awoke whilst all the other inmates of the cottage, one, perhaps, excepted, were still buried in slumbers, which the fatigues and anxieties of the preceding evening,

rendered unusually deep. But Gwentlean was restless, and could not remain in bed. She was trying in vain to separate what had really happened, from her dreams, but could not. She arose, but was scarcely more successful. The bright rays of the morning sun were gleaming through her casement, and she looked forth upon the now calm, unbroken expanse of waters. She remembered that she had been struggling through the ocean to save the lives of her fellow creatures, and she blessed God that He had made her the humble instrument of urging others to so blessed a work. She sought the vessel, but "not a wreck remained"—the quicksands had swallowed her up during the night, and her crew would have shared the same fate, but for the merciful interposition of an overruling Providence. All this was clear: but still a voice rang in her ear. Was it a dream? or had she been so blest as to hear once more, the tones of him she loved? It must have been a dream, for

she recollected having been insensible—it could not have been Herbert's voice that had haunted her sleep all that night, and which came to her again, when she awoke.

She dressed herself silently, and went into her garden to see whether the fresh air of that exquisite morning, would restore her memory clear as before. But still the voice trembled on the very breeze. Again in spite of her resolutions to the contrary, she thought of Herbert. She walked up and down the garden; she plucked a flower here and there—she stood still and mused—but her approaching bridal was distant from her imagination, which wandered far, far away, over the ocean, to the blue-heavened Italy—to the robber's cave. Then it came home again, and the voice haunted her like a spirit. As usual, her steps turned towards Herbert's grotto, and there she sat, half sad and dejected and melancholy; yet half, she knew not why, glad and joyous as of old.

Herbert, too was awake early on that morning. He was too happy and too anxious to sleep long. He arose and determined to go at once to his dear home at Glanheathyn, and see his grandfather. He looked from his window upon the old familiar scenes. Everything was as it used to be—fair and beautiful. But he did not look long, for Gwenthlean passed like a vision, before the window, and ascended the rough steps to her grotto. What mingled feelings of hope and fear—doubt and—shall we say it? jealousy, were his, as he watched her graceful figure disappear amongst the rocks.

But he would learn the worst at once—he would know whether he were forgotten, and another about to fill the place he once held in her affections. He followed her to the grotto.

The voice was still hovering about Gwenthlean, and still she thought of Herbert, when, like the phantom of her thoughts and dreams, he stood before her.

She neither fainted nor screamed, but sat as one paralysed. The pale face became paler than before ; the hands dropped motionless, and the eyes were fixed, as if by some secret and irresistible spell, upon Herbert. She could not speak—she could not rise to greet him. He was nearly as much overcome ; and remained for some moments motionless and silent, gazing upon the delicate, wan, but still beautiful face of Gwenthlean. She was sadly altered—and so was he : both were changed by sickness and sorrow : how changed since they parted, happy in the consciousness of each other's affection ? Herbert spoke first, but his words were few and broken.

“Gwenthlean,” he said, “you have saved my life. I am once more returned. Am I come back in happiness ?” He sat down by her side, and after gazing a little moment into her face, clasped her in silence, and unrepulsed to his heart.

Poor Gwenthlean ! the unutterable

anguish of that moment almost broke her heart. She withdrew herself from his embrace—her head sunk upon her bosom; she covered her face with her hands, and sobbed aloud. Like a broken lily, she could not rise again. Never, never, more could she look upon the open face of him who had never deserted her, even in thought, and who had now returned, after years of absence, privation and suffering, to find her false, and her mute promise broken. There was a long and painful silence, interrupted only by her sobs. She would have quitted the grotto, but she felt chained to the spot—she would have fled to the ends of the earth, to have avoided the unspeakable reproach of that silence, but she knew there was a still more bitter cup in store for her. At last Herbert spoke again.

“ This is a strange welcome-home, Gwenthlean! A sorrowful termination of the hopes I had dared to cherish. Is *all* then true that my worst fears sometimes

tortured me with? Are you so changed? But perhaps I have no right to ask: you made me no promise. I requested none. You were free then—you are so now: but God knows, this is worse than death to me. Only one word—speak but one word, Gwenthlean, and end the dreadful suspense, your silence causes. Are you now another's?"

Gwenthlean's agitation was so violent, that Herbert, terrified at seeing her trembling frame, and convulsed features, ceased his entreaties, and gently removing her hand from before her face, pressed it kindly within his own, and with a soothing voice, entreated her to be calm.

"If you no longer love me, Gwenthlean," he said: "if you have plighted your faith to another, and these sobs and tears are occasioned by your feelings for my distress, cease them, I entreat you. My love for you is pure and wholly unselfish. I shall rejoice in your happiness and prosperity, even though I may not share it,

Think of me now, and treat me, as the brother of your childhood. I have often, in the times of sickness and captivity, pictured the possibility of finding you thus, and have endeavoured to reconcile myself to disappointment. It may be hard and difficult to bear, but do not rend my heart dear Gwenthlean, by these tears. I can endure anything but this : anything but to cause you a moment's uneasiness. Only tell me, by a look or a word, that you are happy, and be assured, I shall be happy also—shall rejoice in my *sister's* felicity. Look up, Gwenthlean : look at me, once—be assured that you may trust yourself—your thoughts and intentions—your inmost secrets with me. I would not lead you into the shade of error, and your promise—no, not your promise, but that one, happy day—shall die with me. *He* shall never know it : never.”

Gwenthlean did look up. One glance was enough for Herbert. The expression of love and anguish, mingling in those soft,

liquid eyes, was more than enough, he could have lived for ever on the recollection of it. She spoke not a word, but he read, or thought he read, strange meaning in the glance. He even ventured to hope again.

“Have you promised, Gwenthlean,” he said.

Again she bowed her head upon her hands, and wept.

“Do you love him Gwenthlean? Are you his from affection, or has the glitter of worldly-wealth; the pomp of external circumstances; the charm of a rich establishment; and the temptations that ensnare so many, seduced your once pure and unsophisticated heart from itself—and changed the feelings that nature gave you, into—but I will not say it. They *are*, doubtless, snares and temptations to the young. Is this the case?”

Again Gwenthlean looked at Herbert, but there was reproach in her eye—reproach and agony. He could not under-

stand it. She was unhappy—she was altered ; still she was another's.

“ I have no right to question you, Gwenthlean,” he said again, after a pause, “ but I could leave you now—leave you for ever—leave you, myself comparatively happy—were I convinced that *you* are happy. But why this strange manner : why this melancholy face : why this altered appearance ? They are not befitting a bride. Have you been persuaded—”

Gwenthlean made a strong effort, and spoke a few broken sentences.

“ Herbert,” she said, “ this must not be. We must part—for—for ever ! you must forget me—forget that such a wretched—such a creature as myself exists. They told me you were false, and then that you were dead. We have been in poverty—and we have *all* suffered—God, I believe, only knows how severely. I am to wed another, and we must be henceforth as strangers.”

“ No, Gwenthlean—never,” said Her-

bert, greatly agitated, "not as strangers. From this hour I devote myself to your service, as a brother. Whether absent or present, my thoughts and prayers shall be for you. Yet again, Gwenthlean, if you love him not, remember that you are preparing for yourself a misery upon which you cannot now calculate—you are even committing an error—I will use no harsher word; for how can you do your duty by one, for whom you have not the feelings of deep and pure affection, necessary to cement that holy tie."

"Herbert, he has been kind and generous—I *can*—" here Gwenthlean paused; she was going to say she *could* do her duty by him, but she looked at the calm, eloquent, noble face and bearing of Herbert, and the words would not follow. She knew how differently she felt towards Mr. Grant and towards Herbert Llewellyn, and she inwardly acknowledged, for the first time, that even *duty*, cold as the word was, would be difficult to perform to the

former with her present feelings. Herbert saw that her mind was greatly troubled and perplexed, and feared he was acting an unkind and insidious part, in thus trifling with her feelings. He rose to leave her, and again her bitter tears flowed fast.

“ You say we had better part, then, Gwenthlean ?” he said. “ Be it so, for the present at least. If ever you want a friend—if, amidst the luxuries and fashion that will henceforth surround you, you should ever want a true, and faithful friend—as long as I exist, you may command one. This has been a strange and bewildered dream, and I fear to awake into the cold and stern reality ; for as yet I can scarcely believe it is all true. Would that I had died—but no. I would still live for you, and for others. My poor grandfather. I fear he is sadly changed. I am going to him now, and shall not return here for some days. I will write to your mother—but she will understand me. God bless

you, Gwenthlean! May you be as happy with another, as I would have tried to make you."

Herbert took Gwenthlean's hand, kindly but respectfully, and somewhat coldly. He could not understand all her motives, therefore he thought she had forgotten him, and that she was now about to marry for worldly considerations. He hated mercenary motives, in himself, and despised them in others. He knew he was poor—almost a beggar; but if Gwenthlean had been in rags he would have preferred her to all others. His breast swelled with a multiplicity of emotions, and, as he held her hand, he looked across the sea, to conceal them. In the midst of the little bay he saw his well-known boat, and easily recognized her rowers to be his old friends, Watty and Morgan, and her principal passenger his grandfather. He felt vexed at being thus forestalled, knowing that every moment that he was detained in Gwenthlean's society, must increase their

mutual embarrassment, and occasion awkwardness to the rest of the party. The rapid and sturdy-strokes of the rowers, soon brought the boat near the shore, and he prepared to leave the grotto.

“ We must meet again, I fear,” he said, “ but you may depend upon my avoiding every word and look that could render you uncomfortable. I shall be able to command my emotions. Adversity, pain, and suffering, are excellent teachers ; I have learnt lessons, Gwenthlean, that I shall never forget, and which will, I trust, enable me to support this last and worst trial. Forgive me if I pain you. I would fain spare you, but my feelings are still, I find, untamed. I will never again allude to this subject. Remember, I am now your brother.”

Herbert hastened to the shore to meet his grandfather, and Gwenthlean stood gazing upon the place he had left. Then she clasped her hands in agony, and falling upon her knees, poured out her soul in an

agitated supplication to the Almighty ; entreating the Power of good to clear her path from the terrible trials that lay before her, and to avert the dreadful doom that was hanging over her.

The meeting between Herbert and his grandfather was most affecting. The old man, like the patriarch of ancient days, fell upon his neck and wept.

“ Now, Oh my God !” he cried, “ I shall die happy--praised be thy Holy name for all thy benefits.”

They walked together to the cottage, where most of the inmates were now risen, and breakfast was preparing. The greeting on all sides was affectionate, but mournful ; for all felt that there was one cloud to dim the brightness of the sun that had lighted the wanderer homeward. He was introduced to Clare as Lady Llew-ellen's daughter, and received a brief outline of her history. He inquired for Margarita, who, as the reader has probably discovered, was the female saved with him

from the wreck. They told him she was well, but fatigued, therefore had not left her bed, but had expressed great anxiety concerning his fate. His grandfather hung upon every word he uttered, with an eagerness and love which were very touching, and as the white haired, and venerable old man, leant upon his shoulder, and watched his features, they would have made a study for Vandyke.

Clare went in search of Gwenthlean, and found her, as we left her in the grotto. She threw her arms about her, and mingled the tears of sisterly affection with hers.

“ You shall not marry him, Gwenthlean;—whilst I live you shall not!” she said, energetically, almost believing it possible to effect what she hoped. “ Herbert is returned—you love him. I know you do—the God in whom you trust will never let you sacrifice your heart’s best affections—believe it, Gwenthlean, it cannot, it must not, it shall not be!”

Gwenthlean shook her head in hopeless

misery, and throwing herself into her sister's arms, wept aloud. Still Clare's words and manner soothed her, and she hoped against hope. Mr. Lloyd had been inquiring for her, and Clare entreated her to be composed, and to accompany her to the breakfast table.

"The effort must be made," she said, "and you had better make it at once. Go to your room for five minutes, and compose yourself, then join us, dearest Gwenthlean. All will be well, I feel, I am sure it will. Only take courage. You cannot marry him. I will appeal to his generosity."

Again Gwenthlean shook her head mournfully ; for she knew such an appeal would be vain. The sisters left the grotto together, and, after a short interval, appeared at the breakfast-table, where Mr. Lloyd and Herbert were seated. The former kissed Gwenthlean tenderly, and in an absent, but pleased manner, told her that "they should be all gay and happy" again, now Herbert was come ; even his

melancholy little Gwenthlean ;” then, appearing to recollect himself, he added “but—” looked grave, and paused. Herbert glanced at her, in spite of his better resolution, and saw the shade that passed over her countenance. He was shocked, when, on a nearer view, he perceived the changes that had been wrought in her. She averted her glance from his, and did not speak a word ; but she listened greedily to all he said. The recital of his adventures, the miseries of his long captivity, and all he had seen and suffered, drew the involuntary tear from her eyes, and once he met those eyes, when they were fixed in liquid earnestness upon him, and believed her unchanged. Every thing he saw astonished or pained him. The mourning dresses, not yet laid by, told him of one who had passed away, and he missed the merry voice of the joyful child who used to climb upon his knee ; and call him “brother.” Still more did he miss the vigour of mind and body that formerly characterized

his grandfather; and the cheerful but serene smile of Gwenthlean. His Italian friend, once the Signorina, now Clare Llewellen, was the only one unchanged in her manner towards him, and she evidently understood what he suffered. She too, was altered, but in every way for the better. He longed to talk to her confidently of all that had happened and was about to happen. As it was, he was bewildered, and could not arrive at the truth, or understand how matters really stood.

He was in the midst of his adventures, and the tea and coffee were cold and forgotten by every one, when the sounds of music were heard from amongst the rocks. As it gradually came nearer and nearer, a perfect tumult of instruments was audible at the bottom of the garden. Harp, violoncello, violin, horn, flute, fife, and everything but an organ and piano, clashed together in most harmonious discord. The little breakfast party rose to look out of the window, and saw a large body of peo-

ple issue from the rocks, ornamented with flags and ribbons of all sorts and colours. The sands at the bottom of the garden were crowded, and there appeared nothing but a moving mass of people. "God save the Queen," resounded from the joint instruments, and the national anthem was played with so much enthusiasm, and touched in so masterly a manner, that our good and gracious Victoria would have rejoiced to hear herself so loyally treated.

In sober and proper state, and with due regularity, a procession marched up the garden walk. First came the miller, supported by Walter and Morgan, bearing a very ancient and somewhat tattered banner, borrowed from Plas Craigyvellyn. His two *aids de camps*, carried a species of may-pole, ornamented with bunches of flowers and ribbons. Then followed something very much resembling a red pocket-handkerchief or two, and a number of May-poles. In due succession came David with his harp, accompanied by the violon-

cello, two violins, two horns, three flutes, and an uncertain number of fifes and clarionets. After them came several sailors, strangers at Cragyvellyn, apparently the rescued of the previous evening, and others of their craft, natives of the place. Bringing up the rear were more May-poles, and women decked with coloured bows, plucked from their Sunday caps, and finally the joint inhabitants of Craigyvellyn and Glanheathyn, men, women, and children, as motley a group as could be seen.

Up they came, to the no small detriment of Gwenthlean's flowers, until the principal actors stationed themselves round the house.

"Long live, Mr. Herbert! Welcome home to Mr. Herbert Llewellen!" shouted forth the assembled crowd, with huzzahs so deafening, that the rocks and hills, and the very sea seemed to echo with them.

Herbert went out upon the steps before the door, and with glistening eyes, was about to mingle with the crowd, and to

express his gratitude by warmly greeting his friends. But this would not do; the miller waved him to the top of the door step: he was breaking through the whole of the regulations of the morning. There was another cheer for Mr. Herbert Llewellyn, and another; then the miller took a piece of paper from his hat, and, in measured tones, read the following pathetic address, which had been composed by Walter, the clerk, who, together with the miller, Morgan, and David, had sat up all night, despite their fatigues, concocting the jubilee—

“Honoured Mr. Herbert Llewellyn,” ahem!

“We make so bold as to endeavour, of our poor ability—‘*abilities,*’” prompted Watty, “of our poor abilities, to express to you the great satisfactions—ahem! it gives us, your friends—‘*and admirers,*’” suggested Watty, “and admirers, to see you returned in health and salvation from the gloomy and *perilious* prison—‘*dungeon,*’”

said Watty, angrily, "from the *perilious* dungeon in which, with sorrow be it spoken, you have been so long." Here was a pause. The word was a hard one. Watty whispered, but the miller did not take. "So long, ahem! carcenterated," at last he ejaculated, as if the effort cost him much loss of breath.

Here a shout enabled him to recover himself, and he proceeded—

"We wish you, from the—ahem! profundities of our hearts—health, wealth, and happiness," so we do, so we do! cried a hundred voices; but the miller looked round with a displeased air, "health, wealth, and happiness," he continued, emphatically, "and may you live long to enjoy the—these, ahem! uncalculating blessings. We also abound in good wishes to your most excellent and prudential grandfather, our worthy—ahem! cler—ahem! ecclesiastic—also to Madam Llewellen and her Christiana-like daughters," an allusion of the clerk's to his favourite work, the

Pilgrim's Progress, "more particularly to Miss Gwenthlean, for whose—ahem!" Watty prompts, "*Mag*,"—prompts again, "*Magnan-im-ious* conduct—there are some here present who desire to return their unbounded thanksgivings."

Here the miller paused, looked modest, made a leg, and retired behind his banner. A shout and cheer succeeded. Then came forward three or four sailors, and the passengers who had been saved from the wreck, followed by Lord Hastings, Mr. Grant, and Colonel Llewellen, who had arrived soon after the procession, and had been long attempting to force their way through it. Gwenthlean was loudly called for, and she was compelled to come forward and stand by Herbert, to receive the grateful thanks of the fellow-creatures she had rescued; for the sailors, and her two old allies, had given her the whole credit of the escape. Then the united forces of harps, flutes, violins, bass-viols and fifes, struck up,

“Welcome home,” whilst Herbert was shaking hands with the miller and as many of his other old friends as could lay hold of him. But David whispered that he was expected to make a speech ; so when the music ceased, he delivered himself of an energetic and hearty return for the kind feeling shown him by his humble friends, which elicited as enthusiastic a cheer as ever attended the Duke of Wellington, or any other great man or woman, not excepting Her most gracious Majesty, our well-beloved Queen.

The surprise and pleasure with which Lord Hastings and Colonel Llewellen witnessed the scene we have described, were very great. They both recognized Herbert, and as soon as they could draw near him, embraced him with every demonstration of joy and friendship. Not so Mr. Grant. The scowl and frown of his countenance were ill concealed by the affected blandness of his manner, as, with an attempt at extreme courtesy, he congratulated Herbert

on his return. But his dark eye glanced suspiciously at Gwenthlean, when, with a languid effort, she returned the expressions of good-will breathed for her by her grateful friends, and then shrunk back, as if fearful of lingering by the side of him whose "Welcome home" had struck and vibrated every chord of feeling in her excited bosom.

But Herbert displayed no visible emotion whilst she stood near him, and Mr. Grant marked him well. He was calm, and expressed himself with feeling and dignity. There were no glances towards Gwenthlean—not even a meaning look. Herbert knew that he was watched, and that for her sake he must be guarded. Colonel Llewellyn was busy with the good hostess, and the "Red Lion" soon disappeared, followed by a dozen neighbours, who returned again, quicker than you would have conceived possible, trundling barrels of Welsh ale along the sands, and bearing tankards of all sizes.

Colonel Llewellen was determined to have a jollification, so after a few more shouts and congratulations, down tumbled the crowd upon the sands, to drink Herbert's health in good Welsh ale, standard-bearer, musicians, sailors, ladies, and all : and capital justice, be it said, they did to the worthy Colonel's liberality.

The "gentry," meanwhile, re-entered the cottage, where Herbert was soon overwhelmed with congratulations and enquiries from his friends, all anxious to prove their joy at his escape and return. Oh! why was there *one* person present, who destroyed, like a blight, the happiness of the rest ?

CHAPTER IX.

DURING these stirring events, Clare had slipped away to visit Margarita, who, aroused by the sounds of music, had arisen from her bed, bewildered, and scarcely conscious of where she was. Clare's long residence in Italy, her foreign accent, and, perfect knowledge of the language, soon set Margarita at ease, and she burst out in every expression of gratitude that her beautiful tongue afforded her. She thanked Clare for her kindness to the poor stranger, asked for Herbert, and then enquired if she were Gwenthlean. Clare told her that she was not Gwenthlean but her sister.

Margarita asked the particulars of her escape, which appeared to her like a dream, and when she learnt that she owed her life, under God, to Gwenthlean, the dear friend of Herbert, she entreated to be conducted to her preserver. - Clare assisted her to dress in her own graceful Neapolitan costume, which she had not laid aside, and begged her to take some refreshment ; but she would not break her fast, she said, until she had expressed her gratitude, and seen her of whom she had heard so much.

She went towards the window, and inquired the meaning of what was passing without ; but her chief object was Herbert. Tears filled her dark eyes, when Clare explained to her that the crowd had assembled to welcome him back from his captivity, and were expressing their love towards him. She knew every body by name ; even picked out David, the harper, and the miller from amongst the throng, and clasped her hands in ecstasy when

she saw Mr. Lloyd standing near Herbert, exclaiming—

“His grandfather lives! his grandfather lives! then all is well.”

As the crowd descended to the sands, and the family party returned to the house, she started suddenly, pointed her finger, and was about to ask one more question; but scarcely had the first word escaped her, when they disappeared beneath the verandah, and she again requested to be taken to Gwenthlean.

In the drawing-room, Mr. Grant was by Gwenthlean's side, watching her pale face with a jealous attention, commenting on her absence of manner, and addressing her alone. She was, indeed, absent from him. She was pulling to pieces a rose she had heedlessly received from him, and eagerly listening to the congratulations, and animated conversation that was passing between Herbert and his friends.

“You are not well, Gwenthlean,” said

Mr. Grant, softly, whilst a frown passed over his face ; " I fear the fatigues of last night were too much for you."

" Oh, no !" replied Gwenthlean, absently, " I am very well."

" Perhaps you are startled by the grave having given up its dead," he said, with a sneer ; " you had better nurse yourself to-morrow, that you may recover the shock sustained, against our *bridal*."

This was said with a voice full of meaning, and was understood. Gwenthlean made a comparison. The one would wed her, knowing her heart to be another's—that other would resign her, because he considered she might be happier without him. True love, she thought, is unselfish, and prefers the happiness of the object beloved to its own.

Lord Hastings had long suspected Herbert's attachment to Gwenthlean, Colonel Llewellyn knew it, and they had compared notes, guessing at the origin of Gwenthlean's sadness and dejection. But it was

too delicate a subject to touch upon, so they had looked on in silence. Now they watched Herbert's averted eye, and Gwenthlean's trembling frame, with increased interest, and perceived that Mr. Grant watched them also. Lord Hastings knew his friend Grant to be selfish, and knew that he would insist upon the fulfilment of the engagement, even though Gwenthlean should declare to him her love for another; for he had heard him say that no power either of Heaven or hell should induce him to relinquish her.

Herbert managed to retain a composure that he did not feel, but his attention was attracted towards Gwenthlean, though his face was averted from her, and his conversation directed to the many kind friends who surrounded him. He thanked Colonel Llewellyn with grateful fervour, for affording him the means of escape, and as his eye kindled into enthusiasm, the old officer looked at him with an intense interest which he did not attempt to conceal;

and grasping his hand with affectionate eagerness, expressed himself happy in having been of so trifling a service to him, and hoped they should be friends for life.

“Everybody loves *him*,” thought Gwenthlean, with an involuntary sigh, which Mr. Grant perceived.

He bit his lips, and walked towards the window, to conceal the frown that was gathering on his brow.

The door opened, and Clare entered, leading in the trembling Margarita, who, as soon as she saw Gwenthlean, without appearing conscious of the presence of others, went straight towards her, and bending her head low over the hand extended to her, poured forth a strain of eloquent thanks, which, uttered in a subdued voice, and the soft Italian language, sounded like music. She said that she had learned to love and revere her before she left her own country; but that when she first trod the shores of England, she had incurred a

debt of gratitude that would never be forgotten until death—

“*No fino alla morte,*” she added, twice, energetically, as she raised her full, dark lustrous eyes towards Gwenthlean.

Gwenthlean had arisen, in confusion, and Mr. Grant was again by her side. Those eyes! what was there in those eyes? Why did Mr. Grant shrink back—then stand and gaze as if fascinated by the rattlesnake? They were turned full upon him.

“*Iddiò! Mordante!*” shrieked Margarita, as she clasped her hands, and rushed towards Herbert for protection.

“The devil! Margarita!” involuntarily exclaimed Mr. Grant, forgetting his self-command, and becoming suddenly as pale as the poor Neapolitan, who sunk fainting into the arms of Herbert.

“Is it possible?” said Herbert, whilst he supported her. “Great God! how mysterious are thy ways.”

All present stood aghast, for none but Herbert knew Margarita's history. They

looked at Mr. Grant, who appeared the very personification of the spirit of evil that he had invoked. Every bad passion struggled in his face, whilst he combated with himself to gain composure—and the hypocrite at last prevailed.

He advanced towards Margarita, and began with—

“Poor girl! I knew her in Italy.”

But his voice recalled her to herself; and she arose and waved him from her with an air of dignity that had better become a queen than a peasant.

The fire of revenge flashed in her eye, and, perhaps, had she been in Italy, and a stiletto in her hand, the softening change effected by Herbert had not spared her destroyer.

Mr. Grant looked at her with a glance half threatening; half supplicatory—but it did not avail. She gave him back a look so proudly determined, that he quailed before his former victim. There, before his friends—before Gwenthlean—she told

the story of her wrongs. Herbert would have stopped her, and spared the feelings and public shame even of a Mr. Grant ; but her words came like a torrent. If Mr. Grant interrupted her, she silenced him with that irresistible Italian eye, which he had praised in the time of its yet greater brilliancy. She told all, but the discovery she had since made of the validity of their marriage.

Indignation was in every breast—no one dared to look at Mr. Grant : but he was not easily foiled. Before she had concluded, he had recovered himself, and, with a forced smile, that blended ill with the lingering shadows of the storm which had preceded it, he said, with effrontery—

“ Merely a youthful folly. There is no one present who has not seen enough of life, to know that these things occur constantly, before reason has sobered our passions, and genuine love obtained the mastery of the heart. Gwenthlean, this will, I fear, prejudice you against one to whom

you have pledged yourself ; but any man who has lived in the army, Colonel Llewellyn for instance, will assure you that I have only sinned as thousands sin, from example—or vanity perhaps—or”—here Gwenthlean's glance of irrepressible contempt checked him, and an expression of pain passed over his face—“Margarita,” he said, addressing the indignant girl he had wronged, in Italian, “you know you too were young and foolish—you would not return to your parents, though I entreated you to do so, and offered you money.”

“Money,” she exclaimed, with scorn ; “can you cure the diseases of an injured mind with money ? Will money pay a *wife* for the desertion of a husband ?”

“Wife,” said Mr. Grant, with a contemptuous smile, “you know I told you afterwards.”

“You told me a falsehood,” she said, drawing from her bosom the certificate of her marriage. “I am your wife,—lawfully your wife. This paper will prove it, and an

address to il Pastor Vermorate will obtain a ratification of it, from the authorities of his parish. Now, disprove it if you can, and if you dare."

Margarita was revenged. A stiletto or pogniard would not have pierced more cruelly through the heart of her deceiver, than did her words. He stood for a moment like a guilty man before his accusers, crest-fallen and humbled. He had no loop hole of escape. The certificate was before him, and his own involuntary recognition of Margarita confirmed the whole. He knew, besides, that he was married to her, for in dismissing his servant shortly after the event, he told them that a real priest had united them. Still he recovered himself and with haughty assurance said that he supposed few who knew him would receive so absurd a tale as a true one, or take the fabrication of an ignorant peasant girl for fact.

Herbert fixed his calm, penetrating look full upon him, and he shrunk beneath it.

“Mr. Grant,” he said, “I believe, and hope, my character for truth stands as high as yours. I, myself, saw the priest give the certificate to Margarita, and heard him declare the validity of her marriage with George Mordaunt, the name you so honourably assumed.”

Mr. Grant bit his lip, yet smiled haughtily. He would have said that he and Mordaunt were not one and the same, but he saw that no one present would believe him, he therefore contented himself with adding—

“I perceive that the evidence of a foreign peasant and a would-be-gentleman will outweigh mine, and that this concocted scene will be received as genuine. I hate private theatricals, and I find myself now the principal actor in them. I must beg to retire from the stage. I hope you have all been amused by this scenic tragedy.”

He tried to utter this attempt at sarcasm calmly, but his lip quivered, and his

brow contracted. He cast a look of frightful meaning upon Margarita, who clasped her hands before her eyes, and almost shrieked. She had loved him devotedly, and there was agony in thus meeting, even though the revenge she had sworn was now more than satisfied ; for she had wounded him as he had wounded her, both in his heart and reputation. If there was meaning in his glance at Margarita, there was pride and misery blended in the one he cast upon Gwenthlean. He drew from his pocket the fatal tablets upon which she had, upon a former occasion, written her name, and advancing towards her whispered in a low, agitated voice, as he touched the tablets.

“Remember ! our agreement is broken.”

Gwenthlean shuddered, but she stood his gaze. Her destiny, as regarded him, was decided for her. She pointed to Margarita and withdrew behind her sister, who stood before Mr. Grant, her countenance glowing with indignation, that he dared not meet. Strong passions were struggling in

his breast, and working in his face. Rage, revenge, hatred, determination, shame, ill-repressed anguish and overwhelming love—for he did love Gwenthlean deeply and devotedly; but there was neither repentance nor sorrow. He would have died with that sardonic smile and glance of scorn on his face, rather than have admitted that he had erred. Proudly and haughtily; but without directly looking at any one, he bowed as he left the apartment, but cold, bad feelings were at his heart. He rushed homeward; and, as he paused on the high rock to look upon the flood boiling below him, he almost wished himself beneath its waters. He laughed a bitter laugh, until the image of Gwenthlean presented itself; and once more he swore revenge. His greatest enemy might have pitied him, had he seen the anguish and rage that struggled within his bosom.

He left, however, but two hearts to pity him at the cottage—Gwenthlean's and

Margarita's. The former pitied him for his sin and his deception—the latter, because she had loved him, and was, by the laws of her country, his wife. The rest were burning with indignation. Mr. Lloyd scarcely understood what had passed ; but he uplifted his hands and eyes with astonishment, as the truth dawned upon him. Lord Hastings was shocked and distressed at having been so far deceived in one whom he, at least, thought honourable. Colonel Llewellyn called him a coward and a villain, whilst Lady Llewellyn looked horror-struck, and trembled. Clare was not astonished, for she had read Mr. Grant truly. She was deeply thankful. Herbert could only look at Gwenthlean, and wonder whether she had ever loved his rival. She was agitated, and very pale ; but there was no appearance of any great anguish or disappointment in her face or manner. Colonel Llewellyn went to her, and taking her hand kindly, whispered, with a half glance at Herbert, that all was

for the best ; and she smiled almost happily, though Herbert knew not why. He could not understand her feelings, and there was not time to probe them, for the gentlemen, as if by mutual consent, prepared to leave the cottage, feeling, that after so singular a scene, they must be sadly in the way.

Herbert shook hands with Gwenthlean ; but she did not look at him, and he wished her good morning with the feelings of a friend or brother. There might have been a fluttering hope at the bottom of his heart ; but if he knew it to be there, he did not indulge it. Still he was happy again, and the bells that were ringing merrily, and the laughter that was sounding loudly, to welcome his return, made his eyes sparkle, and his spirit warm within him.

Gwenthlean escaped up-stairs, and the first impulse of her soul, was to thank her God for so wonderfully making light to shine out of darkness. Then she stood by

her window, looking out upon the unruffled sea, and listening to the merry sounds without. Her heart bounded within her. She was overpowered by joyful emotion. The transition from doubt and misery to internal peace, was almost too sudden and too exquisite to bear. She shed tears—tears of joy. A heavy weight had been taken from her heart, and Hope—blue-eyed, light-winged, buoyant, fascinating Hope—once more

Enchanting smiled, and waved her golden hair.

“I knew it—I told you so!” exclaimed Clare, bursting into the room, and seizing her sister in her arms. “Hurrah! hurrah! happiness again for my sweet sister,” and she danced about the room as if she were distracted. Then she kissed Gwenthlean over and over again—said she knew that she never loved Mr. Grant—that they should do much better without him—and that, in short, they would now be the happiest creatures in the world.

Gwenthlean was aware that there might

be drawbacks to their happiness ; but she could not think of them. She knew that Mr. Grant might yet exercise his power for evil—but even this seemed secondary now Herbert was returned, and there were kind and rich friends about them. She could not—she scarcely wished to conceal from Clare, that her interrupted marriage had made her happy, and that it was no pain to her to renounce the prospect of luxury and fortune, to be the simple Gwenthlean of the cottage still. Neither Clare nor her mother, who entered, followed by Margarita, knew *what* had induced Gwenthlean to accept Mr. Grant ; but both saw the change that had taken place in her countenance. It was the removal of a cloud from the sun—or, her face was like a rainbow, made bright by tears. She could have wished to have revealed to her friends the whole of Mr. Grant's proceedings, and his extracted promise ; but she still felt herself bound down to secrecy.

When Margarita saw Gwenthlean's tears, she looked sorrowfully at Clare, and said that she hoped her disclosures had not been the cause of pain to her preserver; but that she had imagined, before she saw her and Mr. Grant together, that *another* had been affianced to her. Gwenthlean took Margarita's hand, and, smiling through her tears, told her not to be uneasy on her account.

"But if you *loved* him;" said Margarita, with a sigh, "as he *must* have loved you—you will suffer—Still there is one—oh, Signorina! one so good—so kind—so true—who never forgot you—never. Who, in the wanderings of fever, breathed your name, and in moments of deepest agony and suffering, prayed for you, and blessed you. Oh! if you could—"

Margarita paused, for the tears rolled faster than ever down Gwenthlean's cheek, and a crimson flush mounted to her face.

"Yes, she is very beautiful," continued the Neapolitan. "I wonder not that he

loves you, Signora. It is sad that you—forgive me—I pain you, but, oh ! he is too excellent to be forgotten.”

“ I do not forget—” murmured Gwenthean, pressing the hand she held. “ But—” she would have added, “ but circumstances had influenced her.” She paused, however, and turned away, whilst Clare caught up the words, and exclaimed—

“ Let us put ‘ buts ’ out of the question. All will be well by and bye,” and then she sang a couple of lines from the “ Aminta ” with much glee—

“ Ch’ a stringer nobil core
Priana basta la fede, e poi l’amore.”

CHAPTER X.

What fire is in mine ears ? can this be true ?
Stand I condemned for pride and scorn so much ?
Contempt farewell ! and maiden pride adieu !
No glory lives behind the back of such.
And Benedick, love on, I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand ;
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee
To bind our loves up in a holy band ;
For others say thou dost deserve ; and I
Believe it better than reportingly.

FROM ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

ON the morning that was to have dawned upon Gwenthlean's marriage with Mr. Grant, Miriam might have been seen in her young mistress's room, looking disconsolately

upon the simple but elegant bridal dress that had been prepared for the occasion.

“Only to think,” she exclaimed, “all this to be put by, nobody knows why, and everything turned topsey-turvey, nobody knows how. That nice, handsome, generous Mr. Grant, too! Well, well! at the eleventh hour to put an end to it all. It really is *tremendously* disappointing. How beautiful she would have looked too, in this white satin and muslin! All the pearl ornaments gone! returned I suppose. What can one think about it, and what could have occasioned it. Nothing but Mr. Herbert's return, I believe, and the raking up of old love.”

Miriam's soliloquy, as she laid by the bridal attire with many a heavy sigh, was the burden of the conversation of all the good folks of Glanheathyn and Craigyvellyn, who were disappointed of their merry-making. The miller ventured to assure them that they might reckon upon another wedding instead, before long, but

most of them took it as a personal injury. To be deprived of a dinner and a holiday was a national grievance. What the miller meant, I cannot pretend to say, for certainly there were no symptoms of matrimony at the cottage. On the contrary, Herbert and Gwenthlean, though very civil to one another, in a friendly way, seemed not to think of love. But then it was rather soon after the rupture of the engagement with Mr. Grant.

Lord Hastings had followed Mr. Grant to his splendid home, where he was visiting, but could elicit no concessions from him. When he spoke it was with bitter sarcasm, and irony, and mostly upon indifferent subjects—but there was an unnatural restlessness and agitation in his manner, betokening a mind ill at ease. He commissioned Lord Hastings to see Margarita, and to offer her some kind of a settlement, which he did; but the indignant girl refused it, saying she would beg her bread, or die in her poverty rather

than be beholden to him. Mr. Grant declared his intention of at once quitting Craigyvellyn, upon which Lord Hastings proposed paying a visit of a few days to Herbert, at the parsonage, where he found himself domiciled one morning, after seeing the last of his *ci-devant* friend, at a silent breakfast, previous to Mr. Grant's making a start for London.

The Glanheathyn party was a happy one. Mr. Lloyd almost recovered his ancient looks and manners under the influence of his grandson's presence. Colonel Llewellen fussed and fidgetted still—grumbled at the weather and praised India,—yet could not prevail upon himself to leave his new friends, for whom he had a daily increasing affection. He seemed to look upon Herbert as his particular property, and was sometimes seen to watch him with the interest of a parent. Whether Lord Hastings was detained at Glanheathyn wholly on his friend's account or not, time will show, but certain

it is, that the greatest part of his day was spent at the cottage, in ascertaining what Clare Llewellen really was, and whether she had a heart or no.

Herbert's grand object and desire, was to go to Oxford and finally to enter the church. He said he had procrastinated too long already, and wished to delay no longer. His grandfather fully entered into his views, and he determined to leave Glanheathyn when Lord Hastings did. Every one was curious to discover what he thought of Gwenthlean and her engagement with Mr. Grant; but no one, not even Gwenthlean, succeeded. He never alluded to the subject, but bent all his thoughts upon the sacred office he was about to fill. Clare and Lord Hastings were grievously disappointed: not so Gwenthlean. She believed that he would never again feel for her as he had done. The elders thought it better to let things take their course, and Colonel Llewellen told Mr. Lloyd that he was anxious to see

whether there were two young people in the world, who would cling to one another without the adhesive aid of riches or rank. Mr. Lloyd and the Colonel were often closeted together for hours, but what they found to talk about, nobody could imagine, since the one was as *unclerical* and *unWelsh*, as the other was *unmilitary* and *unIndian*.

One morning Colonel Llewellen said he intended purchasing a place in Wales, and that he had seen an advertisement of one, called "Pontavou," which he thought might suit him, and which he intended visiting immediately. He decided upon leaving with Herbert and Lord Hastings; and Lady Llewellen and her daughters were to be again left alone with Mr. Lloyd, for a time.

On the evening previous to the general break-up, the whole party sallied forth together upon the sands. By some strange accident, Lord Hastings and Clare found themselves considerably in advance of the

rest ; I suppose because they were young, active, and good walkers. The rest kept together, and were engaged in talking of the future. Colonel Llewellen said that he understood there was a curacy vacant at Pontavou, and begged Herbert not to accept of one as his title to orders, until he heard from him. Herbert said he would not, but that Lord Hastings particularly wished him to go into England, where both curacies and livings were richer and better than those in Wales. He depended, also, upon his Oxford connection for clerical preferment, but wished to settle where the widest field of usefulness was most likely to open. His wish of aggrandizement was not great, but his desire of benefitting his fellow creatures, to the extent of his ability, was sincere. He would now be content with what a few years ago, he would have spurned—even a small curacy amongst the ignorant people of his own country.

His grandfather listened to him with delight, and Colonel Llewellen applauded

sincerely. Gwenthlean, by whose side he was walking, drank in every word he said greedily, and thought what a blessed lot it would be to aid him in his labours of love, in some wild, country place, remote from the world and its ways, of which, though she had seen but little, she had a great dread. Sickness and captivity had written their marks upon Herbert's face, and lines of deep thought were visible, where formerly the open brow of youth and hope was alone to be seen. But Gwenthlean revered those marks which told not only of suffering but of wisdom ; and him whom she had loved before any real care had weighed down their spirits, was now become an object not only of love, but of indescribable respect. But Herbert, though kind and even affectionate in his manners towards her, was not as he used to be. He seemed shy and reserved before her, and although she sometimes caught his glance fixed upon her, as of old, there was no

allusion to the past—no attempt at explanation. And she could not wonder, since, she asked herself how can he think of me again, when he fancies that I sacrificed my heart's best feelings for ambition of worldly gain and distinction?

In the course of their walk, they passed by the ruined castle. Once more, but in the presence of others, Herbert and Gwenthlean stood, side by side, upon the spot where they had first acknowledged that they were dear to one another. Their friends were remarking upon the beauty of the scene, and the calmness of the summer evening, but *they* spoke not a word. They gazed upon the unruffled bosom of the ocean—upon the far blue mountains—upon the rocks, softened and illuminated by the rays of the gorgeous setting sun—and deep thoughts and feelings swelled in their hearts. Though seemingly separated, those hearts were one. They vibrated to the same chord, and were moved by the same emotion. Gwenthlean

trembled all over. She would have moved away, but she could not. A deep sigh, that came from the inmost recess of the heart, fell upon her ear, and she knew that Herbert, as well as she, was thinking of the past. Her mother called her, and she turned to follow her down the rough path in the rocks. Herbert's eye was fixed upon her with a deep, sorrowful gaze. She met his glance, and a bright, sweet smile illuminated her face. His countenance cleared and he smiled too. A rush of old familiar recollections—of youthful pleasures—of maturer enjoyments, came upon him; and as he followed her down the path, he almost thought times gone by were come back again. Her agitation made her unmindful of where she was going, and her foot slipped. She did not quite fall, but his hand was extended in an instant to assist her, and before he resigned her hand, he had pressed it in his, until Gwenthlean's face once more told tales.

“Where can Lord Hastings and Clare be ? asked Lady Llewellen.

“As far as you can see across the sands,” replied the Colonel with a smile. “They were tired of dawdling on with us.”

Lady Llewellen looked across the expanse of sand, and in the extreme distance saw two figures, just large enough to mark the horizon, and to distinguish the illuminated heavens from their clear reflection in the damp sands. They were advancing towards them, and the considerate Colonel proposed turning, saying that the damp was beginning to fall, and that they should, most assuredly, catch cold. They turned accordingly, and reached the cottage long before the dilatory couple who were loitering behind them.

When they did arrive, however, they were greeted by a lecture from the Colonel, who immediately proposed hot wine and water, and spirits of nitre ; but proposed it with a look at Lord Hastings, so full of

archness, that even Gwenthlean, who feared to annoy her sister, could not forbear a smile.

It was strange that Clare remained a long time in her room, whilst Lord Hastings was as absent as a man in love. It was stranger still, that he suddenly found out that he had received a business letter from Mr. Grant, requesting him, particularly, as a last act of friendship, to see to one or two things at his house, before he left England for the Continent.

These matters would detain Lord Hastings a few days longer at Craigyvellyn. He was very sorry, he said, to be thus unfortunately prevented from accompanying Colonel Llewellyn and Herbert on a part of their journey; but as he hoped they should all soon meet again, it would not much matter.

"Certainly not—certainly not," said Colonel Llewellyn. "I would advise you to remain by all means. Besides, poor Mr.

Lloyd will be so lonely if we all leave him at once."

"To be sure I shall," said the unsuspecting old gentleman: "do, Lord Hastings, make the personage your abode for a little time longer, if you can put up with me and its fare."

Lord Hastings looked particularly happy, when he assured Mr. Lloyd that he had never in his life spent so pleasant a week as the one he had passed at Glanheathyn.

"Will you believe that, Miss Clare?" said Colonel Llewellyn to Clare, as she entered the room, with one very pretty, wild rose, that was known to grow on a tree near the miller's cottage, in her bosom.

"What?" she said, blushing deeply, as Lord Hastings looked at her.

"That the Earl never spent so happy a week in his life as this, or the last: which was it, Lord Hastings? Or was it to-day that was so happy? My memory gets short."

“Not only to-day, but every day that I have had the pleasure of passing in the present society,” said Lord Hastings, again looking at Clare.

The evening passed away merrily. Herbert stood by Gwenthlean's harp, and asked her for one old song after another, which she sang better than she had ever sung before. He watched her narrowly, as, with feeling and tenderness, she tried to make Margarita feel at home and happy, by every little attention it was in her power to offer; and when Margarita whispered to him, that Gwenthlean was all, more than all that he had painted her, he inwardly thought that she certainly was more lovely and more interesting than ever.

A lady's bed-room is a perfect confessional. There are more love affairs discussed, and more scandals brooded over, in this sanctum-sanctorum, than in all the tea-parties of all the single ladies at Bath. Mrs. Caudle's "Curtain Lectures," are nothing to the young lady-secrets poured out by

misses of from eighteen to two-and-twenty, when they meet at night to prepare the *papillottes* for next day execution, and to brush and curl in company.

The cottage was but a small habitation, so Gwenthlean and Clare slept together. They certainly never talked scandal, for their range of fashionable acquaintance was small—but for love affairs! if we may take that one night's conversation as a sample for the rest, they *did* exhaust themselves and their candle in Cupid's cause.

Clare knelt at Gwenthlean's confessional, breviary in hand. Told over all her sins, and received most sisterly absolution, in the shape of almost as many kisses as she had given Gwenthlean on a former occasion. But shocking to say, they even made their mother a party to their love-tales, and she, in her turn, absolved her daughter Clare by kisses and blessings.

And what were Clare's sins and iniquities? They must have been heavy, if her

blushes and most beautiful confusion tell true. She was so astonished, she said—so confounded—so taken by surprise, that she scarcely knew what to say or do. Lord Hastings had actually declared himself in love with her, and had proposed for her! He, the last man in the world that she considered an admirer. He had told her that he had long loved her, but that he had misunderstood her character until he had seen her under her mother's roof. Had thought her too proud and almost too heartless to return a genuine and disinterested passion. He had said that he now discovered the fault to be his own, and that it was his natural mistrust and reserve, that had made him fancy what were really excellences defects—and what was the mere result of position and character, the perfection of art.

He had confessed himself in error from beginning to end, but rejoiced in that error, since it had enabled him to judge.

more entirely of the virtues of one who he had admired in the height of her splendour and prosperity, and loved in the period of her comparative adversity. He had thrown himself upon her compassion for forgiveness for his apparently contradictory conduct, as well as for much that she must have thought restrained and singular in his manner, and had entreated her not hastily to reject a heart that was wholly her own.

“And what did you say, dear Clare?” said Gwenthlean, in breathless anxiety. “I hope you—you—oh! he is so kind—so good. What did you say to him?”

“Why,” said Clare, blushing, and looking on the ground, “what could I say, dearest? but that I felt his generosity—his attachment—his proposal—to be much beyond my deserts—and that I merited all that he had ever thought of me, and was not worthy of his improved opinion—and—”

"But did you accept him, Clare? tell me that. Did you tell him that you loved him as he deserves to be loved?"

"I—I—did not exactly do that, Gwenthlean; but I did not refuse him. I scarcely know what I said, I was so bewildered, and felt so differently from what I used to feel on the like occasions, that I believe he must have thought me a fool. But I hope he quite understood my feelings, and knows that I have always liked him better than any one else."

"Say *loved*, dear—*liked* is a cold word for such a man as he," said Gwenthlean, enthusiastically. "Loving and liking are as different as light from dark."

"*Loved*, then, my sweet sister, if you will," said Clare. "I think he guesses that I *love* him," and she hid her burning face in her sister's shoulder as she spoke the words.

"He is a generous, noble-minded man," said Gwenthlean. "I always saw that he was attached to you, when you seemed un-

conscious of it. And are you happy, dearest Clare?"

"Happy!" exclaimed Clare, emphatically, "how could I be otherwise? I believe the whole world does not contain so happy a creature. I am happy with dear mamma and you—but, now! oh! Gwenthlean, you cannot understand my happiness."

Gwenthlean thought that she had once understood it but too well, and proposed making their beloved mother a participator therein.

CHAPTER X.

Alas, alas !

Why all the souls that were, were forfeit once,
And He that might the vintage best have took
Found out the remedy. How would you be,
If he, which is the top of judgment, should
But judge you as you are ? oh, think on that :
And mercy then will breathe within your lips,
Like man new made.

Measure for Measure.

HERBERT and Colonel Llewellen started the following morning, the one for Oxford, the other for Pontavou, the place he thought of purchasing. Lord Hastings remained behind to settle Mr. Grant's affairs—in other words, to settle his own, which were.

much the most agreeable of the two, and in which he had an excellent auxiliary in Clare Llewellen. The prudent Miriam was in an ecstasy of joy and astonishment. Her sorrows on Gwenthlean's account were forgotten in the satisfaction that she felt at her sister's being about to become a Countess. The Earl and Countess of Hastings! there never was such a name! She could not and would not understand why he was not called "your Earlship," instead of "your Lordship," and persisted in uniting, instead of splitting, the difference, by saying "His Lordship the Earl." By her instrumentality, the news soon spread far and wide; and so great was her forgetfulness of her usual discretion, that, in the height of her exultation, she even began to make it be understood, that her own mistress was, also, properly, a lady of title.

When Lord Hastings, or, as Miriam would have said, "his Lordship the Earl," had settled matters to his heart's content,

he left Craigyvellyn to return home, and inform his mother and sisters of his intended marriage, as well as to prepare for the reception of his bride. He was to call on the Countess Sforza on his way into Dorsetshire, to make her acquainted with her niece's intentions, and to bear a note from Clare, who, in the harmony and peace attendant upon her state of perfect happiness, wished to be friends, if possible, with all the world. It was not without difficulty that she could prevail upon Lord Hastings to make this concession in her name, for he entertained a sovereign contempt for her aunt. When he did consent, it was more from motives of triumph than kind feeling ; for he was anxious to prove to the proud and unfeeling woman of the world, that her niece was even more attractive under the care of the mother she had been taught to forget, than under that of the aunt, who would have misled her young mind from natural affection to pride and artifice.

When he was gone, Lady Llewellen and her daughters had time to think over the many mercies that had been vouchsafed to them, and to trace throughout their varied trials, the guidance of the Divine Hand. The delicate state of Gwenthlean's health was a source of anxiety ; but the relief her mind had experienced, was not without salutary effect upon her body. Still her fragile form and pale face were eagerly watched by the tender mother and sister ; and every possible attention paid to restore her to her former state. Margarita, who gradually became almost happy again, was wholly devoted to her, whilst Miriam's chief care was Miss Clare's *trousseau*.

This worthy's extravagant wishes, were gratified in a somewhat singular manner, and she was enabled to furnish the future Countess with a wardrobe befitting her station. When once misfortune has turned his back and fortune begins to look upon you with a smiling face, there is

no end to your good luck. The old adage—"It never rains but it pours," is a good one, whether it pour sorrows or joys—and so Lady Llewellen proved.

She was summoned away from Miriam's eternal questioning concerning the best way of making a very small sum of money do as well as a large one, by a stranger, who requested to see her privately. He was an old man, of worn and almost wretched appearance; shabbily dressed, but with an air of respectability about him, that spoke of better days. He was shown into the dining-room, and before he sat down, by Lady Llewellen's request; carefully closed the door. He appeared agitated, and remained for some time, looking attentively at Lady Llewellen, without speaking. There was a tear in his eye, and when he did speak, his voice trembled.

"You do not know me, madam;" he said. "Years change us all. Even you are altered."

The voice seemed familiar to Lady Llewellen, though old age had rendered it querulous, and agitation made his words scarcely audible. She said that she did not, certainly recollect him, and begged him to tell her who he was.

“I am afraid to mention my name,” he said, “lest you should spurn me from your presence. But did you know all I have suffered both in mind and body, since I saw you twelve years ago, you would, at least, pity me. I must recal painful hours to your mind, my lady, but my sins have been punished enough. Do you not remember George Lewis, your husband’s—my dear but injured master’s—ungrateful steward?”

Lady Llewellen gave a start and scream of surprise, not unmixed with horror.

“Lewis!” she exclaimed; “impossible! What can you be doing here? How can you present yourself before—”

‘Say it not, my lady;’ said the old man, his eyes filled with tears. “Say not

'before those you have so basely wronged.' I can say it myself, but I cannot bear it from you."

He took a packet of papers from his pocket, and laid them on the table.

"Madam, I would secure the forgiveness of you and yours before I die. I could not go to my grave in peace without it. If sincere repentance can obtain the pardon of the Almighty, as we are told it can, I trust I may yet obtain it; but yours, my lady, I must supplicate also."

"You have it, Lewis," said Lady Llewellen, gravely, but kindly, as she looked upon the streaming eyes and clasped hands of the grey-headed old man before her. "You have had it long. I need forgiveness myself for my own offences, and shall I deny it to a fellow mortal?"

"And your children, my lady? Will they forgive the villain who ruined them. Who helped to bring them down from station and affluence, to the retirement in which I see you?"

Lady Llewellen left the room, and soon returned with Gwenthlean and Clare, who walked towards the Steward, and offered their hands to him, which he clasped and kissed with fearful fervour. Then he covered his face with his hands, and sobbed like a child. Gwenthlean left the apartment, and brought back a glass of wine, which she entreated him to drink. He swallowed it, and looking into her face, said she was too good and too merciful.

“The blessings of a sinful, wretched man be upon your heads,” he said. “And you will yet be blessed. If the labours day and night of the last twelve years, can atone, in any way, for the sins of the past, oh! may mine have not been in vain. Every hour of that time has been employed to repay a small portion of the enormous debt I owe your family, and I should be labouring still, had not increasing years and infirmities, warned me that my end was near. I have been in America till within the last few months, and have

met with such reward as the honest labours of my hands could gain. In this parcel you will find papers that may prove to you, at least, that I have repented of my former ill-conduct. I have reserved enough to carry me to my grave, and I may, perhaps, with your permission, see you again. Oh! ladies; may you never know the heavy weight that bad actions lay upon the conscience. Never, for a moment, has mine been lightened, until now. Your forgiveness, and the hope that you may think less ill of me than you have hitherto done, have given me the first feeling of pleasure that I have experienced since I stood beside my honoured master's dying bed. Once more, say you will forgive me."

Lady Llewellen held out her hand, and the steward fell on his knees and kissed it. She begged him to rise, but he again entreated the pardon of the young ladies. They assured him, over and over again, that they had nothing to forgive, and that

adversity had been more beneficial to them than riches might have been. He arose from his knees, and requested to be left alone for a few minutes, to recover himself. They prepared to acquiesce in his desire, when he once more took the hand of Clare, and said she was the image of her father. They left the room, and remained absent for a considerable time, commenting on this strange interview. Hearing no sound in the dining-room, they began to wonder at the steward's continued silence, and returned. He was gone. The window was open, and he had, evidently, escaped through it. They were alarmed, and went into the garden to look for him. He was not there, but a boat was quickly rowing across the bay, towards a vessel laying at anchor on the opposite side. It must have been waiting for him.

They returned to the house, and found upon the table the packet he had taken from his pocket. It was directed to Lady Llewellyn, and carefully sealed. Lady

Llewellen broke it open, and was surprised by a number of accounts, in which George Lewis was made debtor to Sir Howel Llewellen, for immense sums of money, borrowed or abstracted from that gentleman and his father before him, at different times. These bills seemed to be of an enormous amount, and regularly drawn up. Lady Llewellen unfolded them one after another, whilst her daughters looked on. At last, when they all lay open upon the table, she held in her hand an old leather pocket-book. She unclasped it, and took out another well-sealed packet, directed, also, to her. When she opened it, and saw its contents, they dropped from her hand. She could scarcely believe her senses. There appeared to be an endless number of Bank of England notes of enormous value. Written on the sheet that enclosed them were these words :

“ I, George Lewis, once steward of the late Sir Howel Llewellen, do pay the sum

of ten-thousand pounds to Lady Llewellen and her children, in part of a bill or bills herewith enclosed. The said ten-thousand pounds is honestly come by, and due to Lady Llewellen and her children, as the widow and offsprings of the late Sir Howel Llewellen, to whom I, George Lewis, owed, as the accounts will show, more than I am now able to pay."

Lady Llewellen's astonishment at this extraordinary document may be conceived. She scarcely knew whether to feel glad or sorry at receiving a fortune in so strange a manner. Still it was, as she well knew, hers and her children's; for not only did the accompanying papers, but the old Plas Llewellen accounts, assure her, that the sum was less than their due. It was some time before either she, or her children, could recover from their surprise sufficiently to be able to speak of the proper way of proceeding. Colonel Llewellen was expected in a day or two, and they deter-

mined to submit the whole affair to him. No enquiries availed to discover the steward. He had been seen by no one. As he left so he must have come.

Colonel Llewellen arrived, full of his new purchase, which he was about to make. He advised Lady Llewellen to consult one of the lawyers who had managed the affairs at her husband's death, which she did, and heard from him, that the accounts, given by Lewis, were correct, and the money lawfully hers. She had, therefore, no longer any hesitation in appropriating it to her own, and her children's service. Thus she found herself suddenly raised to comfort, if not affluence : and Miriam, as I hinted at the beginning of the chapter, found herself enabled to provide a proper *trousseau* for Miss Clare's *début* as a Countess.

Meanwhile Herbert was going steadily on at Oxford, where he had been joyfully welcomed by numbers of old friends, but by none more warmly than by Dr. Marsden.

Colonel Llewellen had written to him, and obtained a promise that he would become, for a twelvemonth at least, curate in his new parish, the living of which was, or would be, in his gift, and at the decease of the present incumbent, a very old man, he hoped to present it to Herbert. The Colonel, who was full of crotchets, had begged Lady Llewellen, as a personal favour, not to inform Herbert, for a time, at least, of her increase of fortune. He said that he had private reasons for the request, which she might, perhaps, think ridiculous.

She promised, however, and so matters stood at the time when Herbert was taking his degree at Oxford, about a month prior to his return. He was not to be ordained until after his marriage, as the time fixed for ordination in his future diocese was late in the year.

A note of rather a conciliatory nature arrived from the Countess Sforza to Clare, in which she condescended to overlook her past ingratitude, upon consideration of her

being about to become a Countess. She did not exactly express this in words ; but Clare implied as much. Clare was too glad, however, to be reconciled to her aunt upon any terms to reject this advance, slight as it was, and she accordingly wrote a note in reply more submissive than the Countess had ever expected to receive from her proud spirited niece.

Another extraordinary event preceded Herbert's return. A well-dressed, dark-faced man presented himself one evening at the parsonage, when Mr. Lloyd and Colonel Llewellen were together in the library. Betto could make nothing of him, and she told the gentlemen that she thought he must have come from foreign parts, since he neither spoke English nor Welsh. He was ushered into the library, and Colouel Llewellen fancied he had seen him before. His first words were,

“ Il Signor Herbert Llewellen—Il Signor Herbert Llewellen,” or, at least, sounds nearly approaching thereto.

Colonel Llewellen summoned his small stock of Italian to his aid, and said that Herbert was not at home. The man looked disappointed, and asked for Margarita. Colonel Llewellen asked him if his name was Giulio, to which he cautiously replied that he preferred seeing those who knew him before he mentioned his name. The Colonel smiled, and said that he believed he had the pleasure of his acquaintance, and asked him whether he remembered a certain English captive, in a certain cave in Italy, out of whom he had helped to extract a pretty good sum of money.

Giulio—for it was the friend of Margarita, and *ci-devant* bandit of that name—looked somewhat terrified ; but, recovering his self-possession, he said that Mr. Herbert Llewellen had promised to befriend him, if he came to England, and he hoped that his former little indiscretions would not prevent his being assisted by that good gentleman's friends.

Colonel Llewellen made Mr. Lloyd ac-

quainted with the purport of the conversation, and he, somewhat more hastily than the more prudent Colonel desired, rose and extended his hand to Giulio in token of welcome, begging the Colonel to tell him, that if he had repented of his evil ways, and returned to his God, he would be the first to help him on his road.

Giulio declared that he had made up his mind to become an honest man, and a good christian—and that he wished to get employment as a gentleman's valet; adding, with a sly twinkle of the eye, that good society had made him well adapted to this situation.

“But,” asked Colonel Llewellen, “how are we to be convinced of your sincerity?”

“You must trust to my honour,” he said, laying his hand on his heart. “I was always reckoned a man of my word; and the captain used to say he would back me, for honourable parts, against any priest in the Papal territories.”

“What would you think of me?” asked the Colonel, laughing, “if I were to take you into my service.”

“That your excellency is an honest man yourself, because you take an honest man at his word, without asking too many questions—and because your excellency knows that I may be an honest man in England, whatever my unfortunate stars may have made me in Italy.”

Mr. Lloyd, to whom the Colonel translated the conversation as it passed, took the matter rather seriously, and asked whether Giulio had been made to see the sin of his past life, and was desirous of altering it with a view to a change of heart before God, or merely, because he was tired of it, and wished to live better before men.

Giulio looked at the venerable and benign countenance of the speaker, and became grave in his turn. He said, with much solemnity, that he had not heard the occasional warnings of Herbert, in vain.

That he had been much impressed by his patience under his great afflictions, by the prayers he had heard him utter, and, above all, by the wonderful change in Margarita. That he had asked himself where such strength came from—and that conscience had whispered that it was given by the God he had forgotten and despised. He had tried, in vain, to quiet the fears that had been aroused in his breast, by this inward monitor, and had, at last, decided upon aiding Herbert and Margarita to escape, and to fly with them ; and when it was discovered that they were already gone. He then determined to circumvent, if possible, the designs of the banditti to retake them, and succeeded, more than once, in putting them on a wrong scent. How he finally overtook them, and obtained Herbert's address, Mr. Lloyd and the Colonel already knew. Since that period, he had been doing his best to escape from Italy, and had finally succeeded, having first obtained absolution from a priest, and

made a vow to begin and continue a new course of life.

Again Mr. Lloyd bade him welcome to Glanheathyn, and gave him holy words of encouragement, assuring him that all who truly repented of their sins would be forgiven. Giulio bowed his head reverently over the old man's hand, and said that he hoped to make his resolutions good by God's help.

In the course of a few days Giulio was regularly installed into the office of valet to Colonel Llewellen—a post he filled with so much zeal and activity—so much good humour and cleverness—that the worthy but grumbling Colonel had no fault to find. Margarita was delighted to see her poor friend once more, and argued well of his future good conduct. He soon picked up English and Welsh enough to make civil speeches to every one; and Miriam, who was unacquainted with his previous history, declared him the pink of a gentleman's *vally de sham*.

By no one was Herbert more warmly welcomed home than by Giulio, who repeated to him what he had previously said to the Colonel, of his resolution "to live and die an honest Englishman."

CHAPTER XII.

I see the wealthy miller yet,
His double chin, his portly size,
And who that knew him could forget
The busy wrinkles round his eyes ?
The slow wise smile that, round about
His dusty forehead drily curl'd,
Seem'd half within and half without,
And full of dealings with the world.

TENNYSON.

“MAKE so bold,” Master Herbert, began the jolly miller, “a word with you.”

“Willingly,” replied Herbert, “as many as you like, Mr. Jenkins.”

“Why then, sir, to be plain, I’m thinking of telling you a bit of a secret that has

been a weight on my mind, for some time past, and that, maybe, you would like to hear."

Herbert put himself into an attitude of attention, whilst the miller fidgetted from side to side, and seemed not to know how to begin. At last—

"Well, it must out, wait as long as one will; so you must know, Master Herbert, that a little event happened to me some time ago, that though it didn't exactly concern me, astonished and troubled me."

Here the miller scratched his head, and Herbert made a slight remark, to encourage him to proceed.

"'Twas about the time when Mr. Lloyd, your grandfather—honoured gentleman—was distressed for Jones, the Innkeeper's rent, and when Madam Llewellen was in trouble too."

"When what?" asked Herbert, who, though he had heard of his grandfather's affair with Mr. Grant, did not know that Lady Llewellen had been also concerned.

"Oh! never mind; that's nothing to do

with it," replied the miller, whose natural good feeling forbade him introducing Lady Llewellen's difficulties, because he had relieved them; although, be it said here, he had been repaid his generous loan. "But about the time when Mr. Lloyd was distressed for Jones's rent, I see Miss Llewellen go over to Glanheathyn in the morning, and knowing that she was timorous or so, I thought it might be but polite in me to look after her when she came back, as the evenings were very dark. So about dusk, I set off across the cliff, just as if I was taking an evening's walk, upon the chance of meeting her; for between ourselves, Master Herbert, it is'n't right for such a young lady as her, to be out alone at them hours, in November; and I knew that they were all busy enough at the Parsonage. I walked on pretty quietly, looking about me carefully, to see there was nothing wrong; for I can't say I'm fond of being out myself after dusk; till I came within a stone's throw of the

church. Now 't isn't always pleasant to pass by a churchyard, when it is darkish, and I must say I had a feeling about me when I saw the shadows of the white graves ; for everybody knows there is many a sight to be seen in the churchyard at night. But I was struck all of a sudden by a spirit as I thought at first, gliding along under the churchyard wall. My legs quite shook under me, and I must confess, that for once in my life, I was rayther afraid. But I soon heard footsteps, and as ghosts don't make a noise, I took heart, and thought it might be a man. But then one is'nt always sure of what kind of men one may meet, so I made up my mind, ghost or man, to hide till he had passed me by, and crept softly up into the church porch, where nobody could see me, though I could see anybody ; as well, at least, as the night would let me.

.. All of a sudden on comes Miss Llewellen, poor thing, and I was debating in my mind whether 'twould be best for her, for

me to go out and bear her company, or for me to stop where I was, when, indeed to goodness, the man or the ghost, or whatever he was, spoke to her, and called her by name. I stood ready to defend her, in case of insult, but kept out of sight—because, you see, I thought I had no call to interfere between them when matters went smooth. I could'n't help hearing what passed, for 'twas a pretty calm night, and in a little time I found out that my ghost was the squire, Mr. Grant, for whom, between ourselves, I had never much liking. They began to talk about Mr. Lloyd, and the distress; and Miss spoke bolder and warmer than she ever spoke before, in my hearing. The squire didn't seem to say so much, but he declared that he knew nothing about the matter, but that Williams must be at the bottom of it. Then Miss begged him to go at once and put an end to it all: and sure I never heard any one use more finer language than she did. But the squire wanted to

make a bargain, and said he would do what she liked upon one condition."

Here Herbert made a start and exclamation of surprise, and when the miller paused, asked hastily what that condition was.

"Why, that Miss should marry him, that's all. If she would'nt do this, he said, matters should take their course."

"And what did Gwenthlean—what did Miss Llewellen say?" enquired Herbert.

"Why, she tried to argue the matter a little, but 'twas no good. And then she stood still as a stature, and I thought once she'd have gone over into the sea—and then Mr. Grant asked her again, and after a little more talk, I believe she promised; but I could'nt exactly hear what she said. However, the squire didn't seem pleased at something or other, for he took out his account book and wrote down something; and then, as if he had been making out a bill, he made Miss put her name. Before he could say Jack Robinson, Miss was off.

She just told him to make haste to Glanheathyn, and stop Mr. Lloyd's troubles, and then she turned, and was out of sight before I could leave the porch. To be sure I thought 'twas a strange meeting, and a strange way of making an offer, but as 'twas no affair of mine, I held my tongue, and nobody would have been the wiser for me, if you had'nt chanced to come back again; God be praised for it."

"Thank you—thank you, my honest friend," said Herbert. "It is, indeed, a strange story. You will not mention it again?"

"No, take my word for it: nor should I now, if I hadn't fancied you and miss had always a hankering after one another, and that, to my mind, you seemed less familiar-like than you used to be: and that, perhaps, you might have been jealous or so, of the Squire; which, to be sure, is no wonder, since they were to be married. And, Master Herbert, make so bold, could you tell me what put an end—There, if he

isn't gone without having the manners to answer me. Young folks do forget themselves, to be sure, sometimes."

Herbert had, indeed, quitted the miller, rather hastily, without even a "good morning," and left that excellent man to ruminate over the probable consequences of the disclosure he had made. At first he was inclined to repent of his freedom of speech, seeing how ill it had been repaid; but upon second thoughts his generosity got the better of his selfishness, and he held a soliloquy of some length, in which he reflected that after all it was as well to try to make two young people happy, even though he had once been a suitor for the lady himself. It was with a sigh, however, that he looked around upon his goodly belongings, and recollected that if all the Llewellen family were to marry, he should be left without a soul to speak to of his own station of life. This was dreadful. A lone man without a companion! What

would become of the mill, dwelling-house, out-houses, cows, pigs, turkeys, geese, fowls, and furniture? The thought was oppressive, and the miller was getting sentimental. His serving-woman was ill, too, and he felt the want of a wife to manage his house.

Who is that slim, genteel, smart lady, with mincing step, and a neat basket on her arm, just turning the corner by the mill? What a vision for the depressed miller, in his present dreamy state of irresolution! It is that epitome of virtue, prudence, and discretion, Mrs. Miriam; the fear and admiration of half the bachelors in the country, and the very mental portrait, softened, of course, into feminine beauty of the miller himself. A most proud, and ambitious person; one setting much by herself; decidedly *not* small in her own conceit, and become so ultra-inflated since it had been bruited about that her mistress was a real 'Lady,' that she

scarcely knew, to use a vulgar expression, "whether she stood on her head or her heels."

On she came, tripping, simpering, and mincing. Mr. Jenkins looked at her at first carelessly, then attentively, finally complacently.

"A bettermost sort of a young ooman," he soliloquized. "Not jaunty, and ready for anybody, who'll have her, like the rest of 'em. Capital house-keeper—pickles, preserves, medicines, to say nothing of pastry, and bread. Good cook, too—make a good wife."

"Good morning, Mr. Jenkins," interrupted the lady, in question. "I'm just come to look in upon Molly, Mr. Jenkins, that you're so polite to. Mr. Jenkins. Really you're quite a pattern to the rest of us for generosity."

"A woman of discernment," thought Mr. Jenkins; a discovery made for the first time; but then he was slow at discoveries. "Thank'ee for your compli-

prudent to admit the circumstance, therefore she simpered forth a negative.

"Perhaps," pursued the miller, "you would like just to take a glance of it," and without further ado, he walked with her through the different down-stairs apartments of kitchen, back kitchen, and out-house, after which he trundled up-stairs, at which Miriam's modesty and delicacy were a little shocked, but as her companion did not appear to share her fine feelings, she smothered them. There was a best room, with a four-post bed and curtains; bed-side carpets, and a real Marseilles quilt; and Miriam thought to herself what a nice chamber it would be with a few improvements, in the shape of a muslin blind, and a looking-glass; and if *she* had the arrangement of it, what a tasty place she would make.

It would be impossible to say what a variety of new ideas darted through Miriam's mind, during the space of time

that it took to parade through the house, and it would be equally impossible to describe the novel sensations of the miller, as he saw her tall straight figure gliding from one article of furniture to the other, with expressions of admiration, and an occasional allusion to the great good luck of the lady, who, after so many reports, *should* be so fortunate as to obtain the miller's hand and heart. At last they landed in that elegant parlour with the glass-window above the door, looking into the kitchen, in which the miller's heart seemed always most at ease, and his person most important.

"So you think me not so bad off, after all then, Mrs. Miriam?" he premised.

"I have lived too long in the world, and seen too much of good society—gentlefolks of all ranks—for that, I should think!" replied Miriam in a flattering tone.

That sentence was the luckiest hit she ever made, since the miller supposed it to contain an allusion to his being a gentle-

man, a bit of flattery he could never resist.

"And you think then," pursued the miller, expanding himself something like a turkey cock, "that a lady might find herself comfortable or so here?"

"She must be a very unconscionable person indeed, if she could not, Mr. Jinkins," said Miriam, looking down upon the four-foot square carpet, with a modest simper.

"And supposing you knew any such person, do you think there would be objections to her having a cumbrance along with this mill and its belongings?"

"According to what sort of a hindrance, it was likely to be, Mr. Jinkins," said Miriam, affecting an arch look from the corner of her eye.

"Well now, we'll just suppose that it was the sort of 'cumbrance I might chance to be, Mrs. Howels—what would any lady say to that?"

The miller expressed this sentence with

a serio-comic face, that would sadly have endangered the gravity of any less interested person than Miriam ; but which produced quite a contrary effect on her. She turned her eyes downward, and with becoming grace, simpered forth.

“Why, now, Mr. Jenkins, you really become quite personal—how should I know what any lady except myself would be likely to think—they are so different. There’s my Lady Somerville’s lady-in-waiting, now, who declared she would never marry any one but a gentleman, with such another nice little private property as yours—but then, she’s married, I believe.”

“But what’s your own opinion, now Mrs. Miriam.”

“Why, if you come to the point, Mr. Jenkins, I can’t but say that—upon my word you’ll say I’m flattering you, but—that lady must be the most unconscionable of all persons who could object to such a hincumbrance.”

The miller's little eyes twinkled with delight: he approached the gentle and amiable Abigail, and gazing up into her countenance, for he was the shorter of the two, said,

"Then perhaps you'd have no objection to keep house for me yourself, Mrs. Howels, taking the name of Jinkins into the bargain?"

"Dear me! Law Mr. Jinkins! I declare you've quite flustered me, taking me by surprise so. I'm sure I never thought you meant me in any way at all: to be sure you're joking."

"Never more in earnest, ma'am," replied the miller, getting bolder; and straining his very fat neck upon a level with Miriam's chin, he attempted—Oh! ye modest maidens, spare your blushes!—attempted a salute! How he succeeded, not even cupid himself could tell; unless in the confusion of the moment, Miriam bent her head downwards, in virgin bashfulness, and thus her swain, by raising

himself a little on tiptoe, attained that summit of his hopes, the lips of his Dulcinea. Be it known in parenthesis, that Miriam was tall and thin.

“Happy’s the wooing
That’s not long a doing.”

The young couple had settled all but the wedding-day, before Miriam left the mill, and as she was a person of dispatch, she lost no time in informing her mistress of her good fortune, and it was as good as a farce to see her receive the congratulations of the young people one after another, each of whom had a *jeu d’esprit* to try upon the bride elect. In a day or two afterwards, the miller came in his Sunday’s best, to ask Lady Llewellen’s consent in form, to his espousing her house-keeper, as he was pleased to call Mrs. Miriam. Not all the gravity of all the Puritans could have withstood his look, when, as a sort of ex-

cuse for his conduct, he said that *he* wanted somebody to see to his house and take care of his property, which had occasioned him to fix upon Miriam, though inferior in rank to himself, because she was a steady, sensible woman, and had been brought up under Lady Llewellen's own eye. Lady Llewellen applauded his discretion, and begged to be one of the wedding party. The miller hemmed and hawed, and at last said that he "hoped no offence," but if Madam would't take it ill, he should like to be married the same day as Miss Clare; "and perhaps," he added, "*our* miss may like to follow our example."

Lady Llewellen smiled and said she could have no objection, but she did not know when her daughter was going to be married.

"We will make ourselves agreeable to you, madam;" said the miller, "our time shall be yours."

"Very well, Mr. Jenkins," said Lady

Llewellen, "and I hope you will be as happy a benedict as you have been a bachelor. I can answer for you having made a very good and sensible choice, for Miriam knows well how to manage, and make the best of everything, and is an excellent temper."

"Glad to hear you say so, madam. Always thought so myself," said Mr. Jenkins, with a satisfied air.

CHAPTER XIII.

So long as Guyon with her communed
Unto the ground she cast her modest eye,
And ever and anone with rosie red
The bashfull blood her snowy cheeks did die,
And her became as polish'd ivorie
Which cunning craftsman's hand hath overlaid
With fair vermillion or pure lastery.

Faerie Queen.

WHILST the miller was making his important communication to Herbert, Gwenthlean and Clare were laughing and talking merrily. The former was engaged in an elaborate piece of embroidery, intended as a wedding present for her sister, and any one who had seen her when she was employed

in preparations for her own marriage, would scarcely have believed in her identity. Her needle passed so rapidly to and fro, that the flowers seemed to grow under her fingers; whilst the beautiful smile of days gone by, once more animated her features. Clare had also a make-believe work-basket, full of all kinds of work, near her; but much as she had tried to persuade herself into a liking for needle-work, during her life of retirement, she had not succeeded. She was seated at her writing-desk, on which lay a jewell box, just received from the Countess of Hastings, and several unanswered letters. She took up a splendid circlet of pearls, intended for the head, and showed it to Gwenthlean.

"It is very beautiful," she said, "but it would suit you so much better than me:" and rising, she placed it on her sister's head. "Oh! how well you look! I wish you were going to wear it instead of me. You deserve so much more than I do, and yet I am the happy and favored one."

“Oh! do not say that :” said Gwenthlean. “We are all happy again now, and rejoice with you. Besides I shall be so glad to visit you at Hastings Abbey, and to make myself useful and agreeable as your spinster sister. Good-natured old maid sisters, are always welcome guests.”

“Do not talk of spinster-sisters, dearest,” exclaimed Clare, as she gazed with fond admiration on Gwenthlean ; “but just sing me this song which I found in Tasso. Nay, I will have it : and no hour can be so fitting for it as this. You see the moon is just rising, whilst the sun is going to bed, so you must lay aside your work, and let me hear how these pretty words suit the air for which they are written.”

Clare gave Gwenthlean a copy of verses which were addressed to her, and set to the music of an old Welsh air. They had been written by Herbert before he went abroad.

Gwenthlean blushed, and declared she could not sing them.

“Only one verse,” entreated Clare.
“The words are so applicable to you, and
I promise not to ask who wrote them.”

Gwenthlean sighed, but taking the
paper, sang, in a low voice, the following
song, without an accompaniment.

W E L S H A I R .

“MEUTRA GWEN.”

Come Gwenthlean.

The bright stars glitter far and wide,
The moon lights up the sea ;
Then come, and down the flowing tide,
Gwenthlean, row with me.

How calm the night—how still the wave—
How lightly falls the oar ;
No echo comes from rock or cave,
No sound from hill or shore.

The sea-gull's wild and plaintive cry
Is hushed in silence deep ;
The breezes that are lingering nigh,
Have sunk awhile to sleep.

The rocks are bathed in mellow light,
The mountains gleam afar ;
No cloud obscures the moon to-night,
No shadow dims a star.

And thou art silent, too, my love,
Or whisperest quietly :
As if afraid thy voice might move
The anger of the sea.

But thy soft eyes, so gently kind,
Are like yon glowing sphere,
And speak as surely to the mind,
As language to the ear.

Beneath their cloudless light I see
A heaven of peace and love,
Where all is truth and purity,
As in yon heaven above.

When Gwenthlean came to the end of

the fourth verse, she paused, and Clare urged her to continue. At the last verse she paused again, thinking she heard a footstep in the Verandah; but again Clare insisted upon her completing the song. She did so, and although her voice occasionally trembled, when she thought of the period at which the words were written, she sang it with her usual sweetness and pathos. Again she fancied she heard a footstep, and the rustling of the myrtle leaves near the window.

“I wish Herbert could have heard you sing that song,” said Clare; “and seen you when you were singing it. How blind and dull he is. I wish I were a man to throw myself at your feet, and declare myself yours for ever.”

Gwenthlean smiled as she said—

“Herbert would not care to hear it sung now;” and almost whilst she spoke, Herbert entered the room.

He might or might not have been listening; but, at all events, he appeared

agitated. When the common salutations were over, he sat down, and Clare observed that his eyes were fixed upon Gwenthlean, as she bent, even more earnestly than before, over her frame, forgetful of the pearl ornament she wore. His manners were altered. Hitherto he had been perfectly calm, though rather constrained in Gwenthlean's presence; now he seemed scarcely able to speak. Clare had the conversation to herself, and perceiving the embarrassment of her companions, talked incessantly, as she afterwards said, out of pure compassion. She displayed her new treasures to Herbert, and even ventured to ask whether he did not think Gwenthlean looked better in the pearl coronet than she should look; but the painfully deep blush that overspread Gwenthlean's face, when she felt that Herbert's eyes were fixed on her, made her change the subject.

She then proposed an evening's row upon the "moonlit deep," which, she said,

Herbert had promised them before he went to Oxford, and when that was settled, with all the fertility of woman's invention, she tried Colonel Llewellen's new house, and Herbert's new curacy. But all would not do; Herbert was silent and absent; and Gwenthlean, as she generally was in Herbert's presence, shy and uncommunicative.

Herbert's feelings had, indeed, experienced a total revolution. The miller's tale had opened his eyes; and had explained to him that neither for rank nor riches had Gwenthlean sacrificed her better feelings; but to save *his* grandfather from ruin. He had wronged her—had thought almost unkindly of her—had even forbore to question her concerning her former promise to him—because he had considered, that she must be changed from the Gwenthlean he had once known, to an ambitious, worldly girl; and certainly must have lost all attachment for him.

Now that he gazed upon her with his altered feelings, he began to think that she was far, far above him. That he was not worthy of a creature of so much purity, beauty, and excellence; and that the many sacrifices she had already made, ought not to be consummated, by her bestowing herself upon one so poor in all worldly riches as he was. It is no wonder that he scarcely knew what Clare said, when these thoughts, and hundreds of others of a similar nature, were passing and repassing through his mind. He saw and thought of Gwenthlean alone.

Clare had a truly feminine quickness of perception. She saw a change in Herbert; and she hoped that it boded good. She was accommodating, too, and fancying that her presence might make Herbert more taciturn than usual, she began to think of the best way of relieving him of it.

“Well,” she said, “I must say it is hard

to have the weight of the whole conversation on one's mind. I believe I have talked incessantly; and three 'nos' from Gwenthlean, and as many 'yesses' from Herbert, have been all the aids and abettors I have had."

"Oh, Clare!" said Gwenthlean, looking reproachfully at her sister.

"Thank you for a new idea, my dear," said Clare, gaily; "I will write it down. But I hear mamma's voice, and I want to show her this *étui*; so you will, perhaps, try to amuse one another for five minutes, whilst I take my more communicative self to my most pleasant and agreeable mother," and herewith Clare left the apartment.

When she was gone, an awkward and almost oppressive silence succeeded, during which Gwenthlean felt inclined to follow her sister. As it was, she worked more industriously than ever, whilst Herbert looked on attentively.

"Gwenthlean," he said, at last, "do you

remember the time when I gave you the song you have lately been singing ?”

“ Yes,” replied Gwenthlean ; “ I remember it well.”

“ Perhaps, we were happier then, than we have ever been since,” continued Herbert ; “ for then no doubts had ever arisen in our minds, either of our own faith and truth, or of those of others. And few actual troubles had depressed our spirits. Hope is so bright in early youth, and so dim when care and difficulty have overshadowed it. Is it not so, Gwenthlean ?”

Gwenthlean raised her eyes from her work, and looked at Herbert. A tear was gathering, and those pure, expressive orbs gleamed like drops of dew glittering in the sunbeam. They turned earthward once more, when they met Herbert's fixed gaze, and saw his face quivering with emotion.

“ Gwenthlean,” he said, “ strange events have happened since we parted on that evening, when so many varied feelings

mingled in our farewell. Strange to both of us. I have just listened to a tale that has filled my soul with horror, pity, and admiration. Gwenthlean, I know *all*. Can you forgive the doubts that have appeared to alienate a heart always yours, and look upon me, once more, with the smile of old?"

Again Gwenthlean looked up. Astonishment was in her glance, but mingled with a smile soft and tender as the first blush of morning.

"Yes, I know all; all you have done and suffered for my grandfather—all you have meekly borne for others. Can you forgive my doubts, even though your feelings toward me should have changed?"

"Oh, Herbert!" exclaimed Gwenthlean, extending her hand; "I have nothing to forgive. It is you who have been deceived and injured, not I."

Once more that trembling little hand remained confidently clasped in Herbert's—once more the brotherly and sisterly

feelings melted into deeper and more thrilling ones—and once more they knew that they still were what they had ever been, all in all to each other. In the unutterable happiness of that long, unbroken silence, the troubled past became as a dream, and the present, a joyous awaking. Tears—soft, slow, melting tears—rolled down Gwenthlean's face. She brushed them off, and cast her glittering eyes upon Herbert.

“Mine, then—and for ever,” he said, as with deep emotion and thankfulness, he clasped her to his heart.

The twilight of uncertainty and suspense, and the black night of bitter grief, were succeeded by a calm autumn morning. Herbert and Gwenthlean had suffered much, and had been sobered and chastened by adversity. The sunlight that now dawned upon them had neither the young brilliance of spring, nor the fervour of summer: but the subdued radiance of autumn. They were happy;

but with a thoughtful happiness, such as those who have known the uncertainty of earthly joys, always feel. A happiness more enduring but less buoyant than that which flows from the bubbling well-spring of the heart that has known no trouble.

“Dearest Gwenthlean,” said Herbert, “my path will be a humble one—If you follow it with me, you will find it far, far below that marked out for your sister—below your deserts—below what you might attain—”

“Do not say so, Herbert. I would rather pursue that path than enter the broadest, highest, and most flowery one in the world,” and Gwenthlean’s look of sweet contentment told that she spoke the truth.

“Then we will tend the sick and the poor together, and serve God in retirement and peace,” said Herbert, his face glowing with love and hope. “The dreams of my weary captivity will then be realized, and I shall see you ministering to the wretched as you

were born to do—as the village pastor's bride. Oh! Gwenthlean! it seems too great a happiness. To tread the vale of life together, and together, by the blessing of God, to dwell throughout eternity, has been my prayer, and it may yet be answered. God is merciful, and truly is it said, 'His ways are not as our ways.'"

"Oh, no!" said Gwenthlean, thoughtfully; "out of much tribulation blessings have sprung. My sainted Lizzie said so on her dying-bed. She knew you would return, and that we should be happy again. Had she not been taken from us, I might be now—oh Herbert! But for our misfortunes, I should never have seen my other sister. In your captivity, you discovered Margarita and Colonel Llewellyn. Let us never again say that the hand of God is heavy upon us, since our very miseries may be the instruments of good."

Forgetful of all external objects, they sat together until the moon was high in

the heavens, and looked in upon them as if to bless the re-union of two faithful hearts with her soft effulgence. They had much—very much to say, for there had been no confidence between them since they met. By degrees, Herbert obtained the history of all Mr. Grant's proceedings, and it was with feelings of disgust and contempt that he listened to it, and determined that he would sacrifice his last farthing to remove the obligation that his grandfather yet appeared to be under to him, and to cancel the base agreement made with Gwenthlean. His eye flashed with generous scorn as he heard of the mean artifice he had used to make her believe him false ; and he, in his turn, declared that he had never loved the Lady Louisa ; but not even to Gwenthlean did he confess the proposal made to him by Lord Hastings.

It is unnecessary to enter further upon what Herbert and Gwenthlean said, or did not say ; suffice it, that they were happy,

and had every prospect of happiness. They were aroused from their deep, earnest conversation by voices in the garden.

The considerate Clare had wiled her mother into a walk ; they had been met by Mr. Lloyd and Colonel Llewellyn, and were now returning all together. Clare's arch glance at Gwenthlean said that she guessed all, and the confusion of the latter confirmed her suspicions. The moonlight row, which Clare was determined not to forget, set all parties at ease ; and as the boat glided tranquilly upon the calm bosom of the ocean, Herbert and Gwenthlean felt again as if the days of childhood were come back, and their little world was an unruffled sea.

Having thus brought our principal personages to a happy end, as in duty-bound, I must hasten over a few minor events, that the reader may, if possible, get to the last chapter without having his patience quite exhausted. The reconciliation of the

long disunited lovers was heard with delight by every body. Lady Llewellen told Herbert of their increase of fortune, and said they could live comfortable together now in his new curacy, whilst she blessed the day that had restored him to her child. He made her acquainted with Gwenthlean's secret ; and Mr. Grant's hypocrisy and perfidy had the effect that may be supposed upon her maternal feelings. She even blamed herself for not having seen through him. Mr. Lloyd thanked God that all was as he wished it, and began to think that, after all, he should be strong and well enough to perform the marriage ceremony, for the three brides and bridegrooms elect. Colonel Llewellen rubbed his hands, and declared that he should die happy now he had really seen a young couple come together for love and love alone. He drew Herbert aside, privately, and asked him whether he could be of any assistance in the way of lending him money for present exigences. Herbert

hesitated, and having done what he considered to be due to Gwenthlean—made him acquainted with the miller's church-porch discovery, and asked him to lend him money enough to free his grandfather from his debt to Mr. Grant. To this, Colonel Llewellen willingly consented, having vented a few imprecations upon Mr. Grant, and Herbert had the satisfaction of sending the sum due to that gentleman to his agent.

No one knew how, or why it was, but Colonel Llewellen gradually got matters into his own hands. He was all military precision, and so good and kind, that there was no resisting his propositions. When it was finally settled that all the weddings should take place on one-day, he insisted upon Herbert and Gwenthlean taking possession of his new house, whilst their parsonage was preparing. He also begged, as a personal favour, that Lord Hastings and Clare should take Pontavou *en route* to Hastings Abbey, and that, in

short, the whole wedding-party should proceed straight to his residence, which, he said, he was most anxious to show them. Scarcely had he gained a partial promise to this effect, before he and Giulio set off for Pontavou to make arrangements; he having had a long conference with Mr. Lloyd previously, and having promised to return for the happy day.

Matters went on merrily at Craigyvellyn. The rejoicings at the intended marriages were great, and every one found occupation. The miller and Miriam were truly blissful, and their doings and preparations not the least conspicuous. Mr. Lloyd's old domestics all thought they should die contented when they had seen Master Herbert married to Miss Llewellyn. Clare wrote to her aunt, to invite her for the occasion, and was happy to receive a civil refusal, tempered by an invitation to her house, and a handsome present of jewels. It was settled that Lady Llewellyn should live with Gwenthlean, and

thus make the steward's fortunate payments generally useful. Clare, of course, required no share of what would be to the Earl of Hastings a mere drop in the ocean. Besides, it was his pride to say that he had acted up to his original intentions, and chosen a bride who was neither an heiress nor a spoilt child. Margarita was of infinite service, and almost usurped Miriam's seat, who was so much engaged with her own wedding raiment, as to be oblivious of the long-discussed *trousseau* of her young mistresses ; though, to be sure, she did as much as three people, in one way and another.

The intended marriage of the Earl of Hastings soon spread far and near, and it was, therefore, impossible, and indeed unnecessary, for Lady Llewellen longer to preserve her incognito. Mrs. Wynne and her friends were made acquainted with Clare's relationship to Gwenthlean, and other of the family secrets, which induced that lady to call upon Lady Llewellen and

her daughters. Her example was followed by others of the neighbouring gentry, Lady Jones and her daughters inclusive, who considered the mother of the future Countess of Hastings, whatever she might now be or had been, to be a most eligible acquaintance. The once humble Gwenthlean was cited as a belle, and people did not hesitate to say that it was a pity she should throw herself away upon a poor curate and *ci-devant* tutor, however handsome and talented he might be, when there would be little doubt of her making a splendid match amongst her sister's friends and acquaintances. It was rumoured, also, that Mr. Grant had left the country owing to a disappointment received from this cruel rustic, and various but most unsatisfactory, were the conjectures and conclusions drawn thereupon. From a life of perfect retirement and obscurity, our friends were brought into general notice, and the Llewellen family, their histories, reverses, and final good fortune, were subjects of uni-

versal discussion throughout the county for seven long days. Gwenthlean, her beauty, accomplishments, and the efforts she had made for her family, dwelt upon every tongue ; whilst Herbert, and his adventures, came in for a due share of the public regard.

The subjects of these remarks, meanwhile, went on as quietly as ever, with this exception, that the various matrimonial preparations went on with them. Herbert was ordained, and was to take his new curacy with his bride.

Lord Hastings's settlements were munificent, and all that he did for every one generous to a degree ; but Clare said that she almost envied Gwenthlean her unmonied lot, since she had never endured anything so dreadful as to be obliged to descend to such sublunary matters as parchments and deeds, from the seventh heaven of true-love, in which the vulgar dross, hath not, or *ought* not to have, a part. Thus matters stood, when

Colonel Llewellen wrote to say, that Pontavou was ready, curacy and all, by which time the parchments had been signed and sealed, the wedding dresses completed, and the mill, miller, and Miriam trim as the "money-out-at-interest," and their own joint exertions, could make them.

CHAPTER XIV.

Leave, neighbours, your work, and to sport and to
play ;

Let the tabor strike up, and the village be gay :

No day through the year shall more cheerful be
seen,

For Ralph of the mill marries Sue of the green.

GARRICK.

It was the freshest and brightest of May mornings. The sun's broad face was all laughter and joy ; the sky was not shadowed by a single cloud : the sea heaved and swelled into an undulating dance,

wave seeming to waltz with wave, for mirth: the airs whispered love-tales to one another, and moved the very leaves of the trees to sympathetic tenderness: the birds sang amorous songs amongst the bushes, and made earth glad with their rich melody: the sheep bleated to one another pleasantly, as they wandered over the mountain-side: and the cattle lowed in the green meadows, as if rejoicing in the flowers beneath their feet, and the blue heavens above them. All nature was pleased, and joined in the happiness and harmony of the wedding party. The inhabitants of the united parishes of Craigyvellyn and Glanheathyn were all astir from five o'clock that morning. Every flower and evergreen had been pilfered for miles, and formed into arches, and garlands, hung at every available spot, from the door of the cottage, to the little church upon the cliff. Long tables were laid out in the miller's large field, and portentous-looking barrels

of ale were rolling from the Golden Lion thitherwards. A large fire was in preparation, before which an ox was shortly to hang, and men, women, and children were bustling to and fro, dressed in their Sunday garbs, and making the rocks and hills echo with their merry voices. High praises are spoken of the Earl of Hastings, whose liberality has made the hearts of the poor leap for joy; and warm blessings are poured upon the heads of the brides and bridegrooms.

We will pass over all the heart-beatings, and attirings, and manifold preparations at the cottage; all the mingled feelings of Lady Llewellen and Gwenthlean at the prospect of leaving the scene of so many joys and sorrows: all the fond prayers of the mother, and tears and blushes of the daughters.

We will come at once to the church upon the rock, and proclaim the marriage-ceremony to have been solemnly per-

formed by Mr. Lloyd, and reverently responded to by those whose hands he has joined for weal or woe.

The three bells of the little church strike out as vehemently as their ringers can make them : instantly they are responded to by another peal across the sea at Glanheathyn : and as instantly a long, loud cheer rends the air, begun upon the cliffs, caught up by hundreds of voices upon the beach, and echoed from the well-filled boats and skiffs, that are bearing reinforcements of guests across the ferry, as fast as oars and sails can move them.

Forth comes the bridal party from the church porch. In pairs they descend the rough step, wind through the narrow churchyard, and walk down the steep circuitous path through the rocks, to the sands below, where the carriages are waiting to receive them. Bright and gay they look, as they make their way through the rock-plants and brushwood, down to

the wall of luxuriant perriwinkles that cover the rocks on either side at their base, and seem to wear a smile of welcome in their dark blue eyes. First comes the queenly Clare, leaning upon her noble husband's arm. Proudly, he looks upon her tall and graceful form, as she steps into the coroneted carriage that awaits them ; and a happy man he feels, as he seats himself by her side, in the consciousness that she is now his for ever. The four prancing horses drive off, and the shouts of the people redouble. Now follows the delicate and trembling Gwenthlean, conscious of nothing but that Herbert is by her side, and that death alone can separate him from her. Beneath the long white veils of both the sisters, the blush of excitement and feeling glows ; and the rapid beating of the hearts may almost be seen under the zephyr-like bridal garb. Tenderly Herbert presses Gwenthlean's hand, as he assists her into the handsome travelling carriage pre-

pared for them by Colonel Llewellen, and as they drive away, the cheers that would try to follow them, are stifled by the sobs and tears of the kind-hearted peasants who have known and loved them from childhood. Next come the worthy miller and his bride. We must lay aside sentiment and tear-drops, when we look at them, and take to matter-of-fact and laughter. In his zeal for Miriam's—I beg her pardon, Mrs. Jenkins's comfort—the bridegroom is momentarily in-danger of slipping down the rocky path, and thereby injuring his bridal garb. This consists of the smartest of blue coats and yellow buttons, on which may be seen emblazoned a windmill, a device of his own, which he considers highly appropriate. A yellow waistcoat and white trowsers, complete his attire, to which we must add the most conspicuous of flower bushes, protruding from the largest of button holes. The bride's pea-green poplin dress, white bonnet, and white

scarf, were presents from the Earl, although, be it known, they were of her own choosing, as pea-green is not his favourite colour. It cannot be said that her blushes cause her much discomfort, but she looks happily down upon her jolly miller, and feels proud of him, and well pleased at having become a matron. It is perfectly delicious to watch the pair pause before the splendid equipage prepared for them. It is the carriage of the Dowager Countess of Hastings, in which the Lady Georgiana travelled with her brother from Hastings Abbey to Craigyvellyn. With one finger delicately placed upon the bridegroom's arm, and the point of her foot upon the steps of the carriage, the bride pauses a moment, and looks round upon the assembled villagers, in triumphant humility. Now she skips lightly into the carriage, and smiles condescendingly, and bows her head to her late friends. Far different are the proceedings of the miller. He takes due time to con-

sider, before he ventures to risk his rotundity upon the above mentioned step, and when he does so, seizes hold, not over gracefully, of the two sides of the carriage, through the door of which he forces himself sideways, with some exertion of breath and muscle.

"Well done, old 'un," shouts Morgan, the boy, raising his hat from his head, and beginning the third cheer, which is taken up amidst bursts of suppressed laughter.

Morgan, the boy, and Walter the clerk, have each large bridal favours in their coats, and consider themselves as Mr. Lloyd's footmen for the occasion.

Now followed the Lady Georgiana Hastings and Colonel Llewellen; Margarita and Mr. Wynne, who take possession of another carriage brought by that most excellent of friends, Colonel Llewellen, who takes quite a paternal interest in the whole affair, and who has given both brides away. Lady Llewellen and Herbert's old Oxford friend, Dr. Marsden, and Mrs. Wynne and Mr. Lloyd, complete the

procession, and are received into Mr. Wynne's carriage, to the admiration of the by-standers.

All drive along the sands to the cottage, and if their course through life be as smooth as their first short stage, they will have no reason to complain. At the bottom of the little garden, they leave the carriages, walk up the path through the bright lines of flowers, and again enter the pretty drawing-room.

The horses remain in three of the carriages, and servants are busily running to and fro with luggage, heedless of Gwent-lean's flowers. Changing of dresses is going on up stairs : healths are being drunk in the little dining-room. Lord Hastings and Herbert have just made appropriate speeches, when Lady Llewellyn and her children appear in travelling costume, and with something very like tears in their eyes. Mr. Lloyd embraces and blesses them all three ; Mrs. Jenkins forgets her husband, and the pea-green pop-

lin, and bursts into tears—so does Betto, the old house-keeper. All the party are now in the verandah, uttering hasty, but hearty farewells. Lord Hastings, Herbert, and Colonel Llewellen hurry the three ladies to the three travelling carriages. Mr. Lloyd waves his hat as they drive away, and the people, by this time crowding the sands at the bottom of the garden, pour forth one more long, loud cheer.

Mr. Lloyd, Margarita, Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins, and the ancient domestics, are now in full fuss, aided by the good-natured Mr. Wynne, who will not hear of his wife or the Lady Georgiana departing till all the festivities are over. Incongruous as is the party, it is a merry one, and even the Lady Georgiana gets rid of her hauteur, and enjoys the fun. They superintend the dinner of the peasantry; see that nobody is neglected; forget themselves in the happiness of those around them; and do not separate until the “stars come out by twos and threes.” Then Mr. and Mrs.

Wynne, their guest, the Lady Georgiana, Dr. Marsden and Margarita, accompany Mr. Lloyd to the Parsonage, where they finish a joyous day by a merry evening. It is needless to do more than hint at Mr. Lloyd's night's repose in his easy chair, or at Margarita's bed on the parlour sofa: the guests are well provided for, and that is enough. We must leave them to their dreams, and return to our travellers.

According to Colonel Llewellen's wish and will, his new place, Pontavou, was to witness the honey-moon. It was a long day's journey from Craigyvellyn, but he had forestalled every relay, by ordering post-horses to be ready at each stage; a very necessary precaution, since, as it was, the whole line of country was scoured, to procure the requisite twelve post-horses. We have lingered so long at Craigyvellyn, that we can only just manage to get up with those three smart carriages at nightfall, and just as the lamps are lighted. Colonel Llewellen is exhausting his last subject of

conversation, and Lady Llewellen has sunk into a kind of dose in the corner of the carriage, when they stop at the last stage. The horses are put to in no time, and before Lady Llewellen can arouse herself sufficiently to look out at the little country town, they have rattled through its streets, and are again rolling on between two hedge-rows. She just hears the bells ring merrily, and again relapses into a dreamy reverie.

It gradually grows darker and darker, and the moon has not yet risen. Ten—nine—eight—seven—six—five—four—three—two miles to Pontavou. The carriage turns to the left; it must be the Lodge, but the gates are open, if there are any. A single light suddenly gleams and disappears. On they drive, and the only change seems to be, that the road becomes darker, as if it wound between trees or hills. It is now evidently an avenue. The plashing sound of water arouses Lady Llewellen. She looks out of the carriage

window, but can see nothing but the fitful gleaming of the lamps across the road. Now they emerge from the avenue, and a huge bonfire is seen blazing upon a hill close by ; and at a short distance in front, a brilliant illumination. Out sounds a peal of bells—forth burst the notes of a hundred instruments—but every other sound is lost in the tumultuous shout of thousands of human voices. Now they approach the huge house, every window of which is illuminated : above the great iron gates is a transparency, in which a lion couchant figures conspicuously, and around which, in various coloured lamps, are emblazoned the words “Long live the Llewellens of Plas Llewellen.” The carriages pass through the huge gateway, into a large court, and the shouts are redoubled. “Long live the Llewellens of Plas Llewellen,” seems to echo from the inscription above the gates ; and “Welcome Home !” “Welcome to Plas Llewellen ! Long live the old family,” succeeds the cry.

The young people have alighted, and Gwenthlean is gazing with wonder around her. A sudden bustle, and a hasty call for water from Colonel Llewellen. Lady Llewellen has fainted. She is born into an immense hall, where David the harper is playing, "The march of the men of Harlech," on his harp. The sounds arouse her, and she recovers and looks round. Her children are on either side of her, and they are again in the old entrance hall of Plas Llewellen. Servants, some with familiar faces, stand respectfully around, and the old butler opens the drawing-room door. She enters the room, and sinking down upon a seat, bursts into a flood of tears. Gwenthlean casts her arms round her, and Clare takes her hand, and kneels by her side, both mingling their tears with hers. They are left alone for a few minutes in the great drawing-room of Plas Llewellen, whilst the shouts of welcome are renewed without.

By and bye Lord Hastings and Herbert

entered, and joined them. They looked about for Colonel Llewellen, but he was not to be found. David came in, and Lady Llewellen asked what it all meant. Tears streamed down the poor man's cheeks, as he answered—

“ It means, my lady, that you and yours have come to your own again, and God be praised for it! It is all Master Herbert's and Miss Gwenthlean's now.”

David put a parcel and note into Herbert's hand, directed to him and his wife. He opened the note first: the contents were as follows :—

“ MY DEAR NEPHEW AND NURCE,

“ Welcome to your new parsonage—it is yours. Your father, Lieutenant Llewellen, who fell on the field of Waterloo, was my only brother. Plas Llewellen is my wedding present to his son and daughter. I am the ninety-ninth cousin to whom it must have descended, had not the entail been cut off. Remember ! I quit you, if I hear

any thanks. You have the warmest wishes
of your affectionate uncle,

“ALFRED LLEWELLEN.”

The parcel contained deeds and documents, legally drawn-up, in which Plas Llewellen, and its belongings, were given to Herbert and Gwenthlean, and to their heirs for ever. Herbert glanced over the papers in silence, and then gave them to Gwenthlean, by whom they were in turn presented to the rest of the party. Every one turned to David for an explanation, who gave such information as he had gained.

This was, briefly, as follows:—Colonel Llewellen had discovered, at Glanheatyhn, that Herbert was his nephew. When he found that Herbert and Gwenthlean were engaged, and saw, by chance, the advertisement of Plas Llewellen, he determined to purchase the property, if possible, and to present it to them as a wedding-gift; thus restoring it to the old family. When

he was engaged in completing the purchase, and in looking over the title deeds, it came out through his lawyers, that there was a very distant branch of the family by whom the estate might have been claimed had not the entail been cut off, and who still had the power of succeeding to the apparently extinct title, if they chose to do so. Upon further search, Colonel Llewellen found that he was the identical heir, and although, as he himself said, actually but a ninety-ninth cousin, still the eldest surviving male branch of the Plas Llewellen family. It may seem strange that he was unacquainted with a circumstance that might have had so great an influence over his fortunes : but his father lived and died in England, far from his Welsh connections, and died when he was a mere boy. At the time of his decease the old Sir Howel Llewellen was living, and had more than one son, and he—Colonel Llewellen—scarcely knew that he belonged to the family at all. At a very early age he en-

tered the Indian Army, and did not visit England again, until he was about seven or eight and twenty. At that period Plas Llewellen had still a Sir Howel as its head. At Bath, Colonel Llewellen became acquainted with Lady Somerville, who claimed a Welsh cousinship with him, scarcely knowing whether there were really a relationship or not ; but they chose to think so without going very deeply into the matter. Colonel Llewellen returned to India, and did not come back to England until he was a grey-headed man, without one near relation in the world. He bethought him of Lady Somerville, as the nearest of kin, and wrote to her, as we have already seen, little dreaming that he was about to discover a still nearer relative. His brother had married a short time after his return to India without apprising him of the event ; and the early death of that brother at the battle of Waterloo prevented any later communication between them. As Sir Howel Llew-

ellen was not personally acquainted with this distant branch of his family, it is natural that Lady Llewellen should have known nothing of it, and when Clare told her of the imputed cousinship, she did not think it near enough to risk a discovery of her incognito. Between Colonel Llewellen and Mr. Lloyd the secret had been rigidly kept, and when David was made a participator in it, it was under a solemn promise not to betray it. David had strict orders to see that all at Plas Llewellen was again arranged, as nearly as possible, according to its former state, and he had been absent for several months setting all to rights. It will be remembered that the circumstance of Herbert's father having a brother in India, was named at the beginning of this book.

The surprise of the wedding-party at this detail, may be imagined. Herbert and Gwenthlean looked at each other, and thought how different was the magnificent room in which they then stood, to the little

parsonage parlour they had expected. Gwenthlean dimly remembered everything she saw, and as tears of joyful surprise rolled down her cheeks, she threw her arms round her mother's neck, exclaiming—

“It is just as we left it, my own dear mother.”

Lady Llewellen had no power of speech. Memory was busy with her, and visions of the past came thronging into her mind, and filling her heart almost to bursting. Her children pressed around her, and Herbert kissed her with a son's affection, and said, that if all the dream-like events that had passed so rapidly, were really true, she was once more mistress of Plas Llewellen. Lord Hastings was the most composed of the party, and he set out in search of Colonel Llewellen, who was, however, no where to be found. The shouts were still ringing without. “Welcome to Plas Llewellen. Long live the old family,” seemed to give the very

air a voice, as the words resounded far and near.

The scene was overpowering. Lady Llewellen, could only uplift her eyes and heart to her heavenly father, and whilst she blessed her children, pray for blessings on their benefactor.

The harp was again heard in the huge old hall, and the good, hearty dinner-bell rang out a merry peal. No one had an appetite, but it was evidently expected they should dine, and Lady Llewellen and her daughters recovered themselves sufficiently to dress for dinner. The brides put on their wedding-attire, and when they returned to the drawing-room, they found Colonel Llewellen there. He rose to meet them, and welcomed them to Plas Llewellen.

When Gwenthlean was about to express, in words, the thoughts which her beaming eyes told for her, he said, in a whisper—

“Not a word, or I leave instantly. May God bless you, my dear niece,” and having

kissed her with parental affection, he instantly offered his arm to Lady Llewellen to conduct her to the dining-room.

The band struck up a merry tune, and the shouts redoubled as they crossed the hall, and saw a splendid dinner laid out as of old, at which the ancient butler of Plas Llewellen, now almost decrepit from age, officiated as chief domestic, and the honours of which, at the entreaties of the young people, were performed by Colonel Llewellen, and the former mistress of the mansion, although the Colonel declared it was very hard that the toilsome part of the entertainment should be inflicted upon a visitor.

The viands suffered no great encroachment from the inroads of the guests. They were too happy and too much excited to eat.

Lord Hastings begged to break through the rules of *etiquette*, and to be allowed to propose a toast in the presence of the

ladies—which was “Colonel Llewellen.” The name was carried by the servants to the hall, and thence to the crowds without, who, with the aid of coloured lamps, and the brightly illuminated house, to say nothing of the light of the moon, had managed to do justice to the hogsheads out of doors.”

The health was drunk with enthusiastic cheers, and then followed, in succession, Lady Llewellen's and the rest of the party, until the very moonlit skies seemed to echo back the sounds. After dinner, custom's rules were again dispensed with, and gentlemen and ladies rose together, and went out into the court.

Colonel Llewellen took Herbert and Gwenthlean by the hand, and leading them forward, said, with a voice that had been accustomed to command, and to be heard by numbers—

“Here, my friends, are your young master and mistress. May they be to you

what the Llewellens of Plas Llewellen have ever been, from time immemorial—friends and benefactors.”

The moonlight streamed down upon Herbert and Gwenthlean, as they stood together, and made the young wife, in her light bridal garb, look almost like a spirit. The deafening shouts lasted some minutes, and when they had subsided, Herbert spoke with a clear but agitated voice—

“My friends,” he said, “this welcome is so hearty and unexpected, that I scarcely know how to address you. I can only turn to my uncle, the author of so much happiness, and say that we will strive to deserve what his benevolence has planned for us, and with the assistance of a Higher Power, endeavour to show ourselves not unworthy of the name of Llewellen.”

“I must go away, I see,” said Colonel Llewellen, with tears in his eyes, whilst Lady Llewellen sobbed almost hysterically.

In the midst of the cheers that succeeded Herbert's short speech, a carriage

was observed to make its way slowly through the crowds. The band was playing, and the scene at its height. All the family were at the entrance, whither many an old man and woman, using the privilege given by their grey hairs, were crowding to speak to Lady Llewellen, and bless Gwenthlean's sweet face. The carriage gradually approached, and, at last, drew up as near the door as possible. A lady descended, and Colonel Llewellen went towards her, offered his arm, and returned with—the Countess Sforza!”

Her astonishment appeared equal to that of the rest of the party. Lady Llewellen advanced towards her, and extended her hand, which was taken with evident confusion. They went to the drawing-room, where she looked enquiringly from one to another. Clare kissed her and begged to present her sister Gwenthlean, who, with a face all blushes and happiness, looked modestly at her aunt, as if afraid of the reception she might

meet with. There was something in her air of sweet humility, very irresistible, and it conquered even the Countess Sforza. She actually looked at her almost affectionately, certainly admiringly, and embraced her with more of natural feeling than she had ever been known to show before.

It then came out, by degrees, that Colonel Llewellen had written to the Countess a day or two before, to invite her to come to Plas Llewellen, to meet Lord and Lady Hastings. He had not mentioned any other particulars whatever, and curiosity had impelled her to accept the invitation. The Colonel's motive was not the most amiable in the world, since he wished to see virtue triumph over selfishness; but its results were good. The Countess Sforza's worldly nature was softened, and the unexpected scene she witnessed, made her ashamed of her past conduct. What she ought to have done, had been done by a comparative stranger. Her's was not a mind capable of acknow-

I could not make it out. I liked you : I liked Gwenthlean. I asked Mr. Lloyd about you, and he told me your history. I pondered it over, and it suddenly flashed upon me, that my brother must have married. Upon further enquiry, and comparing dates, I discovered that you were my nephew. The reason of my not knowing of your existence was a sad one. When I came home from India the first time, Herbert and I had a quarrel about a girl for whom I had a fancy. I imagined—falsely I am sure—that he was trying to supplant me, and he left for his regiment in anger. The girl was a flirt, and married a man who had more money than either of us, just before I left England, for India. I took care never to have anything to say to any woman again. This was why Herbert did not write to me about his marriage—When I heard of his death, my grief and remorse were indescribable—I would not tell you that I was your uncle, until I saw whether you and Gwenth-

lean would marry for love, and be content with the prospect of a Welsh Parsonage. I am glad to find that you were both above all mercenary considerations—may you be happy. David has told you the business part of the story. As to the title, I mean to claim it on your account. I should say; have claimed it—and shall have the honour of being Sir Alfred Llewellen in a short time. I like to think that the old Baronetcy and the old place, will descend together to the old family, and that Gwenthlean will resume her proper position, as heiress of the estate—Now all I have to say, is this, that I hate blarney. You must not be for ever thanking me. I shall live amongst you, and be happy. I love you all as if you were my own children. Look upon me as your father, and may God bless you.”

Here the Colonel ceased, and wringing his nephew's hand, left the room.

That night Lady Llewellen and her

children knelt together in her own unchanged apartment. Humbly and earnestly they blessed their Heavenly Father for restoring them to the house of their forefathers, and fervently they prayed to be enabled to bear the sunshine of prosperity with meek hearts, as they had been taught to endure the heavy clouds of adversity.

CONCLUSION.

"They were married, had children, and lived very happily, all the rest of their lives."

Old Story Book.

I do not see why I should not follow the example of my elders and betters in the story-telling line, and make my readers acquainted with what has befallen my heroes and heroines from the wedding-day up to the present period. It will be tedious, prosy, and unfashionable; dull and unprofitable, those readers say. Never mind, I will risk it, and let all that hate common-places, put down the book, and have recourse to imagination.

Before the happy family party, that had been so strangely restored to their old home, again separated, Mr. Lloyd, Margarita, the miller, and his wife, joined them, and helped to make every nook and corner of Plas Llewellen echo with joy and merriment. After remaining many weeks together, they once more dispersed, and returned to their different homes, to settle down, as far as they could judge, for life. The Earl and Countess of Hastings quitted their friends with much regret, although they were received at Hastings Abbey with every possible demonstration of affection, by their mother, sisters, friends, and tenantry. The Earl has not yet repented having chosen a portionless bride, although she was once an heiress and spoilt child; neither does Clare complain of her noble bridegroom. The one continues to rejoice that change of circumstances should have made him acquainted with virtues that the dazzling sun of prosperity had prevented his finding out; whilst the other is happy

to have been loved and chosen for herself alone. These are certainly young days, but our friends are not a fashionable couple; and I have every reason to hope that they will always continue to enjoy each other's society, and to consider Hastings Abbey the most enchanting place in the world. A baby boy of some two or three years old calls lustily upon papa and mamma, both of whom have quite made up their minds not to spoil him.

The Lady Louisa Hastings did *not* die of love for Herbert. She has taken the more sensible part, and struggled against a hopeless attachment. Rumour says she is about to be married to a constant admirer, who has long pined in secret over her coldness of heart; but this *on dit* has not yet appeared in the public journals as a "marriage in high life."

We will dispose of the titles first. The Countess Sforza has graciously thought proper to be reconciled to her various relatives; but strange to say, her luke-warm

affections seem to have been transferred from Clare to Gwenthlean, who, she tells Colonel Llewellen, is the most perfect lady she ever saw. She can bestow no higher praise than this : since human nature, according to her notions, is capable of attaining no greater excellence. She still resides at Bath, and occasionally visits her nieces ; but it is doubtful whether Gwenthlean or Clare will have the larger portion of her fortune.

The worthy Colonel, or more properly Sir Alfred Llewellen, continues to grumble and do good. His nominal home is Craigyvellyn Cottage, which he rents out of compassion to the inhabitants of the neighbouring parishes. Their tears and lamentations at the departure of the Llewellens, moved him to make the cottage a kind of summer, sea-side dwelling, to which his nephew and his family might come yearly. His real abiding-place is Plas Llewellen—but he frequently declares that he will return to India, to avoid the gratitude of Herbert and Gwenthlean, who will over-

whelm him with tokens of affection, in spite of himself. By the aid of Giulio he manages to relieve much distress amongst the poor, and is blessed, in secret, by many an unfortunate fellow creature, raised by his benevolence, from want and sickness, to plenty and health.

Giulio has kept his word, and thus far has been, "an honest Englishman." He does his best to acquire the confidence of his friends, by upright conduct, and frequently expresses to Margarita his contrition for his past, bad life, and his resolution to lead a better for the future.

Margarita passes a peaceful life at Plas Llewellyn, making herself beloved by all; and useful to all. Her devotion to every one in any way connected with Herbert, is remarkable, and his children are her especial care. She has constituted herself their head nurse, and Italian governess; and it seems doubtful whether English, Italian, or Welsh, will be the first language they will speak. Under Lady Llew-

ellen's kind care, Margarita is becoming resigned to the ills she has suffered, and is gradually learning, from the blessed truths of the gospel, to seek for help and strength where alone they can be found.

We have only to turn to the beginning of this book, to see Lady Llewellen's abiding place. In that luxurious *boudoir*, fitted up as nearly as possible as it was some fifteen years ago, she passes a great deal of her time. She is not often allowed to be alone, nor, indeed, does she desire to be. Children and children's children are constantly with her : but the *boudoir* and the adjoining apartments, are her own. Here, too, Mr. Lloyd, dear, excellent Mr. Lloyd, spends a considerable part of his time. Seated in a recess of the window, looking out upon the magnificent view, with a book in his hand, or a great grandchild on his knee, he may frequently be seen, whilst Lady Llewellen is engaged in some other part of the room. Having left an excellent curate at the parsonage,

He was old, and broken down by sorrow and labour, and appeared to have but a short time to live. Lady Llewellen and her daughter wished him to remain at Plas Llewellen, but he said he must go forth again, as he could not bear to live where he had perpetrated his guilt. His course was, however, decided for him by a Power more mighty than his own will. The hand of death was even then upon him. Whilst attempting to quit Lady Llewellen's presence, he was seized with spasms at the heart, which, although they did not at once terminate his existence, deprived him of all bodily strength. He was taken to bed, and tended kindly by Lady Llewellen and Gwenthlean, who received his last words of repentance for the past, with his dying breath.

We now come to Herbert and Gwenthlean, and then our tale is concluded. They have learned, from "the sweet lessons of adversity," to feel for the wants and distresses of others, and to administer to

them with humility. Sudden and unexpected elevation has neither made them selfish nor proud. They know that rank and riches are at best, but uncertain remains, to be accounted for sooner or later. Herbert is the beloved pastor of his own little parish, and is able to relieve the bodily necessities of his flock, whilst he attends to their spiritual wants. With Gwenthlean by his side, he may be seen daily going from orange to cottage, and affording pleasure and happiness wherever he appears. They have renewed Lady Lewallen's schools and clothing-clubs, as well as her Christmas and New Year's rejoicings, and the poor declare that the good old times are come back again. Hospitable without profusion, and liberal without ostentation, they are bidding fair to become examples to all around them, and beloved by all ranks. They have every prospect of seeing happiness begin at home.

A second Herbert and Gwenthlean mak

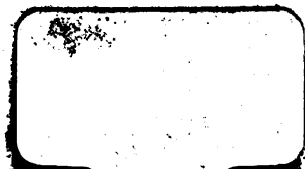
the old house resound with childish laughter, and are the darlings of every heart. Mr. Lloyd has, for the third time, become a child to play with them, and David already discovers the mother's talent for music, in the baby daughter. Gwenth-lean's harp of the Eisteddfod has a conspicuous place in the drawing-room, and whenever too strong a feeling of self-congratulation takes possession of her heart, she looks at it, and remembers the trembling girl, who was thankful to receive a small sum of money, in return for the sounds she drew from its chords.

Herbert and she often talk of the trials of their youth, and learn from them lessons that teach them humility, and make them pray to God to be enabled to show their thankfulness for His mercies, by charity and a holy life—They do not expect perfect happiness or constant prosperity in this world ; and therefore strive to prepare their minds, during the present calm of good fortune, for such adverse winds as

may yet be in store for them. They know that their bark is launched on an uncertain sea; and, that, although it may now be gliding smoothly down the tide, storms, rocks or quicksands may make it a wreck. As good mariners, then, they encourage each other to watch—to use well the compass—to look to the helm—and above all, to obey the commands of their great Captain, as well in hours of security, as in times of danger or suspense. Having thus seen them set sail together, and followed them a short distance on their voyage, we will now bid them “God speed,” and take our last farewell.

THE END.





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